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ABSTRACT

Eight articles are included in the journal of the National Association for Remedial Education, Malaysia (NAREM). Chua Tee Tee describes the history and objectives of NAREM. Alec Williams reviews philosophical issues in remedial education. Khoo Phon Sai discusses cognitive, social, and emotional characteristics of slow learners and considers teaching strategies for mathematics instruction. Wong Kim Seong examines factors influencing the interest for reading and suggests guidelines for reading instruction. The controversy over streaming (ability grouping) versus nonstreaming is analyzed by J. George Puthucheary. Remedial teaching activities are suggested by Chin Loong Kong and Chongkok Beng. (CL)

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1978 Vol. 1

NAREM

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Fr. Chua Tee Tee 14/12/78

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The NAREM Journal is published annually, free for members and is priced at M$2.50 for non-members. It is a forum for the exchange of professional ideas on remedial education. Contributors should submit 2 typewritten copies, double spacing, addressed to the Editor c/o Curriculum Development Centre, Ministry of Education, Pesiaran Duta, Off Jalan Duta, Kuala Lumpur.

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THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR REMEDIAL EDUCATION, MALAYSIA – NAREM

By
DR. CHUA TEE TEE
NAREM Chairman & Deputy Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya

The National Association for Remedial Education may be said to have begun with the establishment of a protem committee towards the end of a three-weeks' in-service course to train teachers of slow learners, organized by the Ministry of Education. The inaugural meeting was attended by 71 founder members made up of qualified special education teachers, general education teachers undergoing the special in-service course, Ministry officials, two overseas lecturers who conducted the in-service course and a number of college and university lecturers.

The protem committee comprised of Dr. Chua Tee Tee (Chairman), Miss Monica Leong (Vice-Chairman), Mr. Saw Teik Chye (Secretary), Puan Hajjah Hashimah Roose (Treasurer) and three committee members: Miss Tan Lee Kiang, Encik Yaakub Karim and Cik Halimah bt. Hj. Shariff. Their functions included drawing up of a draft constitution for NAREM and seeking formal registration with the Registrar of Societies. Following formal meetings and through a number of personal contacts and individual effort by the respective protem committee members, preparations were finalized to hold the First Annual General Meeting.

NAREM was honoured by the presence of Mr. Kum Boo, JSM, KMN, PBS, Director of Schools, Ministry of Education, who graciously declared the official opening of the Inaugural Annual General Meeting on December 18, 1976. Attended by more than 80 interested teachers, lecturers, parents and inspectors of schools, including the Deputy Director of Education for Selangor and the Federal Territory, the opening ceremony augurred well for the future of NAREM. In his official address, Mr. Kum Boo briefly traced the history of remedial education in the country, congratulated those present for showing interest and concern for slow-learning children and wished NAREM success in its endeavours.

Following the official opening and a short tea break, potential and current members of NAREM remained behind for the General Meeting. Interested members came as far away as Perlis, Kelantan, Perak and Negri Sembilan. The draft constitution of NAREM which was presented at the Meeting was approved in toto, subject to any necessary amendment as suggested by the Registrar of Societies. After the acceptance of the draft constitution, the meeting elected the following to serve on the Council for the year 1976/1977:

Chairman
Dr. Chua Tee Tee
Vice-Chairman
Puan Hajjah Hashima Roose
Secretary
Encik Saw Teik Chye
Assistant Secretary
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Treasurer
Puan Wong Mei Ling
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Puan Yap Hong Kuan
Editor
Cik Tan Lee Kiang
Committee Members
Encik Othman bin Haji Mohd. Ali
Encik Chan Kir Yee
Cik Tay Hung Ghee
Encik Yap Sang

The following were also elected/nominated as State representatives:

Johor
En. Alit b. Md. Shariff

Malacca
En. Lee Yat Nam
Negeri Sembilan
Puan Normah bt. Samat
Pahang
En. A. Manaf b. Abdullah
Selangor
Puan Chin Loong Kong
Perak
Cik Putri Hamidah bt. Megat Zakaria
Perlis
En. Abu Bakar b. Mohd. Daud
Kelantan
Cik Hajjah Naimah bt. Hj. Abdullah
Kedah
En. Mahmud b. Othman
Trengganu
En. Yusoff b. Jusoh
Penang
En. Abd. Rahim b. Hj. Ishak

The 1977/78 office bearers elected at the second A.G.M. on Nov. 12, 1977 are indicated on the inside cover of this journal.

The objectives of NAREM may be stated as follows:—

1. To promote the welfare and education of children with special educational needs.
2. To promote dialogue and close cooperation at a professional level on matters pertaining to remedial education.
3. To promote and sustain interest through study, research, courses and conferences in this area of special education.
4. To disseminate views and news on remedial education by means of the Association's publications and other media.
5. To promote the status of those engaged in remedial education.
6. To look after the general welfare of its members.

Whether or not NAREM achieves its professed aims depends a lot on the individual and joint effort of each Committee and ordinary member. We in the Executive Committee have attempted to achieve some of these objectives. Among the activities may be cited the following:—

1. Regular meetings of the Executive Committee. 6 meetings have been held for the year 1976/77.
2. Formation of a sub-committee to look after publications, under the very able leadership of Miss Tan Lee Kiang.
3. Co-opting new members to serve on the Executive Committee in view of their particular expertise or interest. Among them are Mrs. Chin Loong Kong and Miss Nivedita Naganather.
4. Attendance by more than 600 educators and interested parents at a Public Lecture on "Implications of Remedial Education in Malaysia" by Miss Marie Jeanne Low, Federal Inspectorate of Schools, at the Education Department, Selangor and the Federal Territory on February 12, 1977.
5. Attendance by more than 60 members and friends at a Lecture on "Teaching Mathematics to Slow Learners at the Primary School Level" by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Khoo Phon Sai at the Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, on May 28, 1977.
6. Distribution of the following informative circular letters dated
   (i) Feb. 4, 1977, with the Bahasa Malaysia version provided by Encik Othman b. Hj. Mohd. Ali.
   (ii) July 9, 1977
   (iii) Nov. 4, 1977
   (iv) March 3, 1978
7. An interesting workshop with a practical bias was conducted at the Curriculum Development Centre, Ministry of Education on "Games and Activities for Remedial Education" by Mrs. Chong Kok Beng and Mr. Chan Kin Yee, ably assisted by Puan Normah Samat, Mrs. Chin Loong Kong and Mr. Yap Sang on Saturday, Aug. 27, 1977.
8. A successful A.G.M. on November 12, 1977, at the Curriculum Development Centre, Ministry of Education, with a key-note address entitled 'Remedial Education in a Changing World' by Mr. Alec Williams, Director, Special Education Department, Hull College of Education.
9. An interesting and informative lecture-cum-discussion 3-hour session on "Rancangan Pemulihan dalam Bacaan" by En. Abu Basar Shah, a remedial education teacher, held at the Faculty of Education, Univeristy of Ma-

laya on March 25, 1978.

10. A lecture with a practical bias on 'Keputusan-Keputusan dan Implikasi-Implikasi Kajian mengenai Kegunaan Bahan-Bahan Pengajaran Kendiri Imbuhan untuk Pengajaran Bahasa Malaysia kepada murid-murid Darjah Tiga', by Dr. Koh Boh Boon, Lecturer, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya.
11. The publication of a journal in the latter part of 1978, to be available **free** for members and at $2.50 for non-members.
12. The setting up of a NAREM Resource Centre at the Hishamuddin National Primary School, which has now a collection of over 100 books, magazines and journals.
13. Free distribution to Founder members of a very instructive booklet entitled "Listening and Speaking" published by the National Association for Remedial Education, England.
14. Search for and adoption of a Logo for our National Association.

Our attempts at providing services for our members have so far been modest. However, with the assistance and cooperation of so many enthusiastic Executive Committee members and ordinary members, I am quite sure that NAREM can play an important role as a local professional body to look after the interests of slow learners and special education teachers and as a supportive group to Government to provide more educational facilities for the hitherto neglected section of the school population.

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking my very active Executive Committee members, especially the Secretary and Editor, friends and supporters of NAREM and last but not least, the Kuok Foundation and the Lee Foundation for their generous support.

?REMEDIAL EDUCATION?

By
ALEC A. WILLIAMS
Director, Special Education Dept., Hull College of Education

A task I undertake with the greatest satisfaction and pleasure is to take this opportunity to congratulate N.A.R.E. (Malaysia) on its successfu inauguration and to wish it well in its future endeavours. This is not only a personal wish but also comes from the National Executive of the N.A.R.E. in the United Kingdom. Having the privilege of knowing most of your elected officers, I am confident that they will neither underestimate the task ahead, nor be easily deterred in seeking solutions to them. My small contribution to these endeavours is to pose some questions in relation to the very complex and untidy terminology in this field and to briefly examine some of the underlying concepts.

'Remedial' education has achieved international acceptance as the banner under which teachers are striving to meet the needs of children who, for some reason, are not successful at school. As in the U.K. and in other countries, your Association has elected to use the term in its title. At some future time however, in the light of recent thinking that is emerging, I am convinced that we may feel it necessary to reconsider the terms we are using.

With few exceptions, the education systems of the world, backed both by public opinion and national aspirations and needs, place a high value on academic prowess and success. For the able, the rewards are many. For the unsuccessful child, regardless of possible effort expended, all too frequently there will be indifference, patronisation and even punishment. It is perhaps therefore inevitable that any term relating to the non-prestigious end of the ability spectrum tends, with the passage of time, to lose acceptance, usually to be replaced by another which in its turn develops its own negative associations. 'Dull', 'backward', 'retarded', 'underfunctioning', 'educationally sub-

normal', 'slow-learning', 'culturally' socially and environmentally disadvantaged' along with both 'remedial' and 'compensatory' education are terms which at one time or another have been, or are being, accepted and are now in varying degree on the apparently inevitable path to disfavour. An instant is our term 'remedial'. Its medical origins and associations, runs the argument, carry implications of a form of rescue operation following some form of educational malady. Its practitioners are called in only after failure or breakdown and subsequently operate within the narrow limits of the original problem regardless of its wider implications. Is this an ideal basis, it is asked, on which to develop an educational value system seeking to give dignity and self-respect to a substantial section of our school population?

Perhaps our terms reflect our attitudes. It can hardly be considered surprising, in view of pressure to produce 'results', that some teachers have developed negative and condemnatory attitudes towards children not achieving an expected 'norm' of achievement or behaviour. The child is regarded essentially as someone who **can't**. The danger accompanying this 'vacuum hypothesis' is that regardless of relevance or individual need, **any** form of apparent success is uncritically accepted. We may consider that our less able children have too many real needs for such an inconsequential approach to be countenanced.

A viewpoint that we may find philosophically more acceptable is to regard each child, whatever his level of functioning, as bringing his own particular **abilities** to the task in hand. Any scholastic task or skill has as its starting point elemental readiness levels from which the terminal level is ultimately achieved through a sequence of sub-skills in ascending order of difficulty. Thus, a child with whom we are concerned may be on a lower rung of the ladder than his classmates but he is an **achiever** at that level. Then, providing we care, providing we are sufficiently skilled and sensitive at determining the level of his particular starting point and providing we carefully sequence the subsequent stages, we have justifiable grounds for optimism. Thus the label 'non-reader' is replaced by our regarding the child as bringing to the communication process a wide variety of language and perceptual sub-skills on which we intend to build. Thus we have a practical and satisfying approach in keeping with a philosophy that values each child for his own sake, regardless of ability.

A progressive and dynamic approach encompassing concern for the child's social, personal and emotional development might be considered to far exceed the normal interpretation of 'remedial' education. How far does the notion of 'compensatory' education better meet the situation? Coined in the U.S.A. in the 1960's, the original concept of specific projects to counter the effects of social and environmental deprivation has now been widened as applying to many forms of education which have as their aims the counteracting of:

1. Malnutrition and physical defects which impair learning efficiency.
2. Language inadequacies, not only in vocabulary but in the organisation of syntax and language structure.
3. Perceptual deficiencies, visual and auditory, largely as a result of paucity of appropriate experiences.
4. A relative inability to sustain attention, particularly in the face of structured cognitive demands.
5. A short term view of life, whereby immediate gratification is put before future advantage.
6. A poor self-image, with feelings of inferiority both as a person and a learner.
7. A high incidence of behaviour problems, especially truancy and delinquency.
8. Early withdrawal from school.
9. A lack of motivation towards school learning and educational achievement.
10. Scholastic under-achievement accompanied by a tendency to be under-rated by teachers.

(from Chazan M. Compensatory Education. Butterworths 1973)

Compensatory programmes have tended to emphasise the importance of early intervention, structured learning programmes, clearly defined behavioural objectives, curriculum modification, parental involvement and planned co-ordination with social and other state agencies. Whilst this broader view may appear more in keeping with Malaysian aspirations for the children who are our concern, the concept of compensatory education,

inevitably, is not without its critics. They point to the relative lack of success of intervention programmes, they criticise the unselective ways in which programmes have been applied, they claim that insufficient attention has been paid to individual learning needs and that the reality of low genetic endowment has been ignored. Furthermore, it is claimed that by focussing on deficiencies within the community, the family and the child, attention is drawn away from the absurdities and inadequencies of the normal school programmes. If the priorities and value systems implicit in both the curriculum and organisation of the normal school could be challenged and reconsidered, it is argued, the necessity for what are termed socially divisive Compensatory programmes could be eliminated.

It may be in the future that screening procedures and diagnostic measures will be sufficiently sophisticated, and teachers will develop that degree of expertise and sensitivity in the identification of the child 'at risk' but who has yet to fail, that the notion of 'preventative' education could become a reality. N.A.P.E. instead of N.A.R.E? Though this may appear in keeping with our aspiration it is probably unrealistic in that it cannot seriously be argued that all learning problems and deficits can be anticipated. There would still remain a need for some form of 'remedial' education.

Our respective Executive Committees will not take lightly to the notion of reprinting our Associations' notepaper with a new name at each shift in educational thinking or in keeping with a new term that has become fashionable at a particular point in time. What is evident, however, is that there is a continuing need to examine, analyse and evaluate our role, both in relation to the wider educational scene and in the light of the increasing skill and knowledge that we bring to bear on our task. What better forum than the N.A.R.E. (Malaysia) to fulfil this function?

TEACHING MATHEMATICS TO SLOW-LEARNERS IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

DR. KHOO PHON SAI,
Assoc. Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya

INTRODUCTION

The invitation by your Society to give a talk on the above topic is a privilege and also an opportunity for me to put my own thoughts in order. My acquaintance, interest, and experience with slow-learners in the primary school have been a relatively recent affair, beginning with my involvement in the CDC project on Compensatory Education in 1975 more specifically that component of the project concerning lower primary schools and focussed on overcoming the problem of learning deficiencies in the subjects of English Language, Bahasa Malaysia and Mathematics for pupils in Stds. 1 to 3.

I would first like to indicate the scope of my talk and this is illustrated as follows:—

1. Who are the slow-learners?
2. Why are they slow-learners?
3. How can we tell?
4. What can we do?

I would however like to begin with a brief account of my own experience with the project and then continue with the major sections of this talk based mostly on the accumulated experience of other researchers in this topic.

As I see it, the main aims of this component of CDC's Compensatory Education project are twofold:

1. to explore various possibilities of making teachers more responsive to and proficient in solving the problem of learning deficiencies in the major subject areas of Bahasa Malaysia, English Language and Mathematics in the lower primary school, and
2. to foster the concept of sustainability among the teachers and educational administrators (es-

pecially principals of schools, key personnel and curriculum development personnel) so that the termination of the official intervention programme may lead to continued and sustained efforts in the desired direction.

To achieve these aims the teachers and principals of 12 selected schools in Selangor/Negeri Sembilan and Kelantan have been coaxed, cajoled and compelled to participate in a series of activities. In the first year of the project, centralised workshops were conducted. In the second year, school-based workshops were attempted. The relative lack of success in this strategy prompted the idea of combined school/district workshops in the third year and that was in 1976. In the spirit of sustainability, no one set of learning/teaching activities were prescribed but rather various learning/teaching/remedial activities were explored, firstly in the workshops and, hopefully, eventually in the classrooms. The activities/strategies explored ranged over such ideas as analysis of the Std. III Assessment results, programmed materials in Bahasa Malaysia, diagnostic tests, games, work cards and so on. As far as materials for learning/teaching/remedial purposes were concerned, the emphasis was not to limit the kinds of materials that involved production by CDC but rather to encourage the production of these materials by the teachers themselves.

More specifically as far as mathematics is concerned there have been several developments:

1. a system of classification and analysis of Std. III Assessment results in Mathematics,
2. suggestions for diagnostic testing, especially the concept of place value,
3. games, activities and work-cards (a cooperative effort with Mr. Saw Teik Chye of the Federal Inspectorate).

How well these suggested activities have been carried out at the level of the classroom has yet to be systematically evaluated. This task is being undertaken by the evaluation section of the project. However, from the reports of visits to schools and discussion with the teachers, it must be said that receptivity to ideas such as the above does not quite match the implementation efforts by the teachers. There are, of course, various reasons for this situation, but more on this later.

1. WHO ARE THE SLOW-LEARNERS?

Now, who are the slow-learners? What characterizes this group of pupils? We may take as a working definition that the slow-learners are the pupils who for various reasons are performing below the average pupil as regards to both school achievement and general intellectual performance, in short, pupils who are not achieving at the desired level. You are no doubt aware of the number of reasons why pupils do not achieve the desired level in mathematics, and the multiplicity of the possible causes has been emphasized by the number of different labels used to describe such pupils – under-achievers, low-achievers, low-ability pupils, educationally disadvantaged, culturally-deprived, emotionally disturbed, and so on. In using the term slow-learner in maths I think we have in mind basically those pupils who learn mathematics slowly and who have a history of slow-learning in maths. Since speed of learning is not the only criterion for ability in mathematics, it should also be noted that by slow-learners we usually mean not only those pupils who are and have been slow in learning mathematics but also possess low mathematical ability.

In the education literature from the West, slow-learners have also been defined as follows:

"The slow-learners are those children who score between approximately 75 and 90 IQ on a verbal intelligence test. Translated into comparative intellectual growth terms, this means that they are developing at a rate between three-fourths and nine-tenths that of the average rate." (Johnson, 1963[1])

To appreciate the significance of this definition, one should notice how this definition separates the slow-learners from the more severely retarded children as well as from children in the normal range of learning ability. More specifically, we find one classification (Schools Council) of less able children as follows:–

Remedial: ESN & SSN; I.Q. < 70

Adaptive: Dull Children, $70 <$ I.Q. < 85
Potential Limited
Need To Adapt Curriculum

Corrective: Normal Intelligence,
Educationally Retarded (Illness, Absence) (Havering, MTA)

To quote from the report on Remedial Mathematics (Havering Maths Teachers Assoc.[2])

"Retarded children are not necessarily dull. The adaptive child is working to capacity, the corrective one is not. There are thus two problems: the children who are working to capacity and those who are not. The problem is always to pinpoint them, and hence diagnosis is important right from the beginning."

A little digression is I think appropriate at this juncture. Firstly, depending on one's assumptions about slow-learners, the implications for planning for remediation will differ. "If we consider the slow-learning child as one with limited abilities and potential for learning, then our emphasis will be on creating learning experiences suitable for his circumscribed capacity. However, if our approach assumes that the child is a changing organism whose development is affected by both external and internal factors which may expedite or impede his development, our thinking and planning for his education will consider his motivation for learning as well as his cultural environment." (Leiderman, 1964[3]). In other words, depending on one's assumptions about slow-learners and one's value system on education, we may **either** lower our expectations and modify (even dilute) a given curriculum according to the assumed limited capacity of slow-learners (at the risk of mixing metaphors to cut the dress according to the cloth material available) **or** to provide an enriching educational environment so that the slow-learner may develop according to his needs, capacity and interests.

Secondly, a definition of slow-learners based on the use of an Intelligence Test may be questioned on several grounds. Fortunately or unfortunately so far as I know there is not yet available any standardised intelligence test for Malaysian children based on Malaysian norms. However, the argument against the use of the I.Q. as an indicator of slow-learning is as follows. The I.Q. may be misinterpreted to be genetically derived and hence immutable against changes in environmental experience. Secondly, if the I.Q. is used to predict future performance, the assumption may be questioned that it is based on the existing state of experience and development which produced the I.Q. and that this will not change radically. Thirdly, although the I.Q. provides an indicator of intellectual functioning, it does not provide sufficient information about the nature of slow-learning nor how this slow-learning has developed. In short, it is a risky and not very profitable business to use only one set of criteria to classify children as slow-learners.

Having made this digression, I wish to return to the main purpose of this section, that is to describe the characteristics of slow-learners. I recognize that much of this description is highly dependent on literature from Western countries and I would strongly recommend that this Society undertakes as an urgent task a survey of Malaysian children to determine at least the general and perhaps peculiar Malaysian profile on slow-learners. Lacking empirical information on Malaysian children, I would nevertheless venture to assert that many of the major characteristics would be valid even for Malaysian children or at any rate many of the characteristics would be recognized as relevant of Malaysian slow-learners

I would first like to quote from R. Gulliford[4] (1969) because he provides an excellent description. "Weaknesses in the thinking processes involved in mathematics are observed in pupils of any level of ability, but in their most pronounced form they are observed in the least able children. Many writers have referred to slow-learning pupils as being poor at 'picking-up' principles and making generalizations, slow to see relationships and to develop concepts. Counting on the finger and other immature habits tend to persist. They are poor in making the transfer of knowledge to different tasks and situations. They are retarded in the acquisition and use of a mathematical vocabulary. They are poor at solving verbal problems and happiest when dealing with concrete situations, such as those involving money. They are least happy with abstractions." Gulliford continues "It is only too easy, for example, for children to work through well graded series of sums from books or from cards (conscientiously prepared by the teacher) and to be quite proficient at making the right response within the range of numbers and operations which are being practised at a particular time. Yet the teacher may be baffled by the inability of some children to give sensible answers to the same tasks orally or to use apparently learnt facts in everyday problems. What can be even more baffling is that this can

occur even when children have had ample experience with apparatus prior to meeting the tasks in symbolic form. They have not abstracted the ideas from their concrete experiences, or the ideas are not sufficiently grasped to be thought about without concrete aids."

In short, one may say that two important characteristics of slow-learners are:

1. Lack of reasoning power and little or no capacity for abstract thought.
2. Lack of sustained curiosity coupled with marked inability to draw conclusions. (Cleugh, 1961[5])

More specifically, the deficiencies in cognitive functioning may be characterised by such aspects as a limited vocabulary, deficient formal speech patterns, inability to abstract symbols, restricted reading and listening comprehension, and a general paucity of information, concepts, and relational schemata (NCTM, 1972, p. 4).

Apart from such cognitive or intellectual characteristics, it is necessary also to mention emotional or affective social and environmental characteristics of slow-learners (NCTM, 1972, Ch. I as follows):

1. **Poor self-image.** To the extent that he has been unsuccessful in school and marked as a regular failure, a slow-learner is likely to have a poor image of himself (poor self-concept). He may have fear and anxiety (for example of exposing his ignorance in front of the class), frustration (when information seems irrelevant or incomprehensible), and humiliation and embarassment (repeated failure, special "detention" classes, feeling of being placed at the bottom of the class, and not infrequently being called hopeless or stupid by the teacher).

2. **Learning style.** Who amongst us is not unaware of pupils who need to act-out his thinking — pencil tapping, finger counting, mumbling the number names, waving hands and so on, showing dependence on physical manipulation — physicalization versus verbalization in using language symbols. It must be noted however that

   "A pupil may be slow because he is extremely careful, meticulous and cautious He may be slow because he refuses to generalize easily. He may be slow because he cannot understand a concept unless he does something physical . . . . . A child may be slow because he learns in . . . . . a one-track way, that is, he persists in one line of thought and is not flexible. He does not easily adopt other frames of reference, such as the teacher's, and consequently he may appear slow and dull." (NCTM, 1972[6]).

3. **Reality set.** It has been said that many slow-learners value education but dislike school. In a sense, they have a reality set; they are not satisfied by a phony world, and they raise questions about the relevance of their school experiences. Slow-learners need to sense reality in the problems with which they are confronted, to sense at least occasionally that something important has happened in the school mathematics setting. This is not to suggest that relevance must be based solely on vocational meaningfulness; for what is relevant to a slow-learner is often related to his affective concerns, to his inner uneasiness. Fun, enjoyment and discovery can also be relevant if they reach the inner feelings of the learner. Unfortunately, as Bruner has noted, the problem is that learning is taken out of the context of immediate action just by dint of putting it into a school and the result, at its worst, has led to the ritual, rote nonsense that has led a generation of critics to despair." (NCTM, 1972, p. 8).

4. **Immediate gratification.** Related to the sense of irrelevance of school work, slow-learners often find it difficult to appreciate long-range goals. For them immediate satisfaction or gratification needs to be experienced. To study arithmetic in order to prepare for future studies or vocation is not readily understood. It is the here and now, the results that they can feel and see, the fun in the activity that count. In the well-known saying "I hear I forget, I see I remember, I do I understand," there is a possibility that a slow-learner's physical style of learning and reality set may lead to having fun in the activities and seeing immediate results rather than to understanding.

5. **Lack of school skills.** Children in schools have to acquire certain skills in order to be able to cope with school life — listening skills or paying attention to the teacher without interrupting (put up your hands if you want to speak), persistence or attention span (if you cannot get

the sums right, wait your turn till I come round to you), reflective response versus impulsive response, initiative (do not just sit there when you have finished, do something else like reading your book) and so on.

2. WHY ARE THEY SLOW-LEARNERS?

One could go on enumerating specific characteristics. of the negative attributes, of slow-learners. However, I turn next to the question of the causes of slow learning. Two preliminary remarks need to be made. Firstly, so far as I know there is no systematic information available about the causes of slow-learning in mathematics in Malaysia. The Drop-Out Report provides some clues but not directly bearing on mathematics. Here is another area of concern that the society could act upon. Secondly, in the literature on causes of slow learning, very often we come across statements that are also used to describe slow-learners. This seems a strange situation. However, for whatever it is worth, let me present the relevant portions of a summary on the causes of backwardness in arithmetic (Schonell, 1975[7]) and leave for your later discussion the question of the validity of this list for Malaysian children:–

CAUSES OF BACKWARDNESS IN ARITHMETIC

(Adapted from Schonell, 1957)

A. ENVIRONMENTAL

- Lack of pre-school experience
- Home Influences
- Absence from school
- Discontinuity (standard to standard, school to school)
- Teaching methods
  - Over-explanation of processes
  - Over-emphasis on mechanics
  - Too-extensive syllabus
  - Lack of attention to prerequisites
  - Bad grading of examples

B. INTELLECTUAL

- Low general intelligence
- Weak memory for numbers
- Weakness in concentration
- Weak vocabulary/reading ability

C. EMOTIONAL

- Psychological effects of failure
- Impulsive, nervous child
- Unsympathetic teacher

3. HOW CAN WE TELL?

By now I think you have a good idea of the slow-learner in mathematics. It will most probably be found that the slow-learner in mathematics is also slow in the languages and other subjects. However, it is necessary to distinguish among the three types of backwardness mentioned earlier – the remedial cases requiring specialised attention, the adaptive and corrective cases who may be slow learning for different reasons.

My interest in this section will be confined to the diagnosis of specific areas of weakness in primary school mathematics, particularly as regards cognitive or intellectual skills. I have mentioned earlier when discussing the use of the I.Q. that it is a risky and not very profitable business to use only one set of criteria to classify children as slow-learners. However, within the scope of this talk I shall confine my attention to only some aspects of diagnosing specific areas of weakness in slow-learning.

In the first place, there are only a limited number of practical ways for a teacher to proceed to diagnose the learning problems of a slow-learner.

1. Observe the pupil at work
2. Interview the pupil
3. Analyze written work
4. Use diagnostic tests.

In general, there are only two basic procedures for diagnosis: (1) the **nomothetic** procedures based on the study of the results of groups of children, e.g. the use of various kinds of tests, and (2) the **idiographic** which is concerned with the individual's unique and idiosyncratic responses and reactions to a given situation (NCTM, 1972, p. 305-8); the examples are observing and interviewing pupils and analyzing written work.

There is no time here to discuss the do's and dont's in using any of the procedures. Numerous references are available but it is one thing to read, to hear and discuss the procedures and quite another thing to actually carry them out.

I would like to take this opportunity however to give a few illustrations, not of the process but the product in using diagnostic procedures.

You may recall that earlier I mentioned the development of a classification scheme of Std. III Assessment results in mathematics. The rationale is as follows. The ostensible aim of the mathematics Assessment is to provide information to teachers to help them become aware of and able to overcome pupils weaknesses in mathematics. Unfortunately, the Assessment Tests have come to be regarded as another public examination, the results of which have been used in most cases for other than the original purpose. The omnibus nature of the maths tests (two papers covering almost the entire range of items in the Std. III syllabus) places limitations on the use of the results. Too often only the total score is used to indicate whether a pupil has done well (pass) or poorly (fail). Within the limitations of the Assessment tests, it is possible to obtain more information than just the overall performance. Towards this purpose, I have analyzed not only the questions but also the distractors for questions (the tests are mutiple-choice), objective-type tests.) Some of the results of this analysis are as follows:–

ANALYSIS OF ERRORS IN STD III ASSESSMENT

39
\+ 8

A. 37 Place-value error
B. 47 Correct answer
C. 48 Basic addition error
D. 317 Place value error

Paper I: CLASSES OF ERRORS

CODE

B Basic combination errors
V Place-value errors
Z Role of zero errors
O Wrong operation

By examining the kind of wrong answers given for each question it is possible to determine the kinds of learning errors which have been made by a pupil. Within the limitations of the tests, it is possible to determine whether or not a particular error (e.g. place-value) is persistent. An example is as follows:–

PATTERNS OF PUPIL ERRORS
PUPIL'S
RESPONSE

Qn. No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	....
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	....

CLASSIFICATION

A	(B1)	B1	07	B1	(01)	V1	V1	V3	(V5)	...
B	B1	(✓)	07	01	02	(✓)	✓	✓	V1	....
C	✓	B1	(B1)	✓	✓	V5	(B1)	01	B1	....
D	B1	B1	✓	(B1)	V3	V5	V5	(B1)	✓	....

PATTERN OF ERRORS

B1	✓	B1	B1	01	✓	B1	B1	V5	....

In this example, it would appear that this pupil has consistently made a B1 error – basic addition fact.

Two remarks are necessary. Firstly, the pattern of errors obtained through this analysis is suggestive, not definitive, of a learning disability. Follow-up work is necessary to ascertain that this pattern is in fact the case. Secondly, although this procedure produces more information than just the overall performance, it requires a little more effort on the part of the teacher. The most important point to be made is that through judicious use of available information, it is possible for a teacher to detect and perhap confirm the learning profile of a slow-learner in mathematics based on the Std. III Assessment tests.

In connection with the Std. III Assessment tests, it should be mentioned that the Examinations Syndicate is aware of their limitations. Since at least three years ago, it has been suggested that the Syndicate is considering the replacement of the present form of Std. III Assessment by a battery of criterion – referenced tests, that is, a collection of a number of tests, each of which is aimed at determining whether a particular skill has been mastered. Perhaps, in the not too distant future, we may expect an improvement in the mode of Std. III. Assessment.

While I am at the Std. III Assessment, I am tempted to give some tentative results based on a sample of about 4,000 pupils in Selangor and Kelantan (1973 data). I must emphasis that the results are tentative and suggest the major kinds of errors that have been found:–

MAJOR KINDS OF ERRORS
STD. III ASSESSMENT 1973

BASIC ADDITION:	39	36
	+ 8	+29
	48 (50%)	64 (43%)

BASIC SUBTRACTION:

738
−538
300 (28%)

BASIC MULTIPLICATION:

8 x 6 = 14 (61%)

BASIC DIVISION:

32 ÷ 4 = 6 (55%)

PLACE-VALUE

49	78	351
x 8	−46	26
3272 (52%)	22 (45%)	225 (71%)
	or 4.2	

WRONG OPERATION

8 x 6 = 14 (61%) 9 ÷ 3 = 12 (51%)

ZERO

260
− 59
21 (55%)

It seems a pity that with the vast amount of information available in the Examination Syndicate, no detailed analysis of the Assessment data is readily available to indicate the extent and nature of weakness in primary mathematics.

Mention has been made of diagnostic tests. I am interested at present in validating a set of such tests for the four basic arithematic operations. The idea is based on a Swedish research project (Kilborn & Lundgren 1975[8]). In the first place, it is necessary to set up a hierarchical arrangement of tasks, as in the following example:–

MULTIPLICATION HIERARCHY
(Kilborn & Lundgren)

(02B)
3.20 = 60

(01) 2.3 = 6 | (02A) 8.7 = 56 | (03) 2.4 + 1 = 9 .....

(11)	(12)	
2	4	
.3	.7	
6	28	One digit only

(21)	(23)	
12	47	
.4	.2	
48	94	One/two digits

(32)	(34)	
32	43	No addition
.4	.8	Algorithm
128	344	

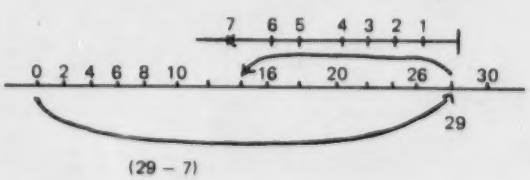
(41)
23
.12
46
23
276

The example is only part of a larger matrix or hierarchy for multiplication. Consider the task in cell (23). It is assumed on an **a priori** basis that ability to do this task presumes the ability to do all the tasks to the left and above this cell. It is a necessary step I think to determine whether this hierarchy is equally applicable to Malaysian children. Once this has been established then it is possible to construct a battery of diagnostic tests based on each cell of this hierarchy.

The determination of systematic errors which this procedure implies can be carried out even without the availability of an empirically validated hierarchy. For example, the following set of questions may be used:–

SYSTEMATIC ERRORS

I.	29	34	45	57	66
	− 7	− 3	− 4	− 5	− 4
II.	32	50	24	45	76
	− 6	− 8	− 5	− 9	− 8
III.	49	28	83	39	67
	−11	−16	−32	−25	−42



(29 − 7)

The examples are logically arranged in three levels (Cox,1975[9]). It has been claimed that a five-item test for each skill or concept is sufficient to give a reliable indication of systematic error.

I would like to mention at this stage that too often diagnostic tests of the kind indicated depend on paper-pencil, symbolic representation. I think it is important to distinguish between symbolic form and non-symbolic (ikonic) or pictorial form of representation. It is my hypothesis that diagnostic results may be different if a pictorial form of testing is used. It may even be necessary to go down to the level of using an action-form (enactive mode) using apparatus and oral approach to present the situation.

You are no doubt aware of the work of Piaget and have been influenced by Piaget's enthusiasts who emphasize the role of activity to precede reasoning processes. "I hear I forget, I see I remember, I do I understand" is one interpretation of the importance of engaging the child in activities that will encourage the growth of ideas based on experiences of actions with concrete materials. According to another psychologist Galperin there are "five stages by which an action becomes internalized thought . . . . . (1) By explanation or demonstration the teacher indicates the task (for example, what groups of counters make up ten?);

2. The child masters the action for himself with apparatus;
3. He then masters the action on the plane of audible speech, i.e. he makes a verbal statement of what he had done. This is a step away from the concrete towards thought;
4. Transferring the action to the mental plane; the action can be performed in the head; and,
5. Consolidating and practising the mental action so that it becomes automatic and fluent. (Gulliford, 1969, p. 80).

My previous contention of the need to have different forms for diagnostic testing – symbolic, pictorial, action-based – is in line not only with the hypothesized stages of development but also consonant with good teaching.

"Galperin's five stages provide one way of thinking about the failure of individual children in acquiring particular concepts. Is the child at stage one, lacking a clear idea of what operations he is being prompted to perform or what relationships to look for? This is often a perpatinent question with slow-learners who often go through the motions of using apparatus in class when it is by no means certain that they are mentally ready, or ready by virtue of previous experience. . . . . At stage two, we have to inquire whether the child has had sufficient concrete experience to enable him to master the action. An important issue is whether there is a sufficient range of materials and situations . . . . . It may be that the child's difficulty is at stage three – he is unable or reluctant to make the transition from the concrete. . . . . Finally, it is the child at stage four or five in need of plenty of practice in order to consolidate the mental action and make it fluent and automatic? This would be so with pupils identified as accurate but slow." (Gulliford, 1969, p. 81-82).

It should be clear from what I have said so far that it is not enough and perhaps undesirable to be able to say that this child is a slow-learner in maths. It is most important to be able to determine why he is slow and in what specific ways. No one method of diagnostic testing is sufficient – both homothetic and idiographic procedures need to be used. Apart from specific learning weaknesses, it is necessary to bear in mind other possible related causes of slow-learning – perceptual, motor-skill co-ordination, home background, emotional problems.

4. WHAT CAN WE DO?

Finally what can we do? Perhaps too much is expected from too few to do the many tasks in remediation. Let me quote from a 1971 issue of Forward Trends: "In 1963 three qualified teachers were sent to the United Kingdom for training in the education of slow-learners. In subsequent years a few more teachers were trained so that a three-year pilot scheme for remedial instruction was initiated in six primary schools in January 1967 in conjunction with the EPRD of the Ministry and the Dean of the Faculty of Education, University of Malaya. Based on the outcome, it is hoped to be able to devise a suitable programme for slow-learners throughout the country" (Vol. 15, 1971, p. 18).

It has been said that hope lives eternal. Perhaps this Society can perform a service to the country by documenting the history and the facts and

figures about remedial and compensatory education. We have gone a long way since 1963 only to find that we are not very far from the beginning of a very long haul.

The CDC's project I mentioned in the beginning shows the earnestness with which the problem of slow-learning is being tackled. It is being realized that besides time, money, personnel, teachers, syllabus, organization and other matters, fundamentally the problem lies in the system as well as in the values, motivations, attitudes of people in the system.

Specifically, as regards the curriculum, it has been suggested that the syllabus needs to be revamped to make it more relevant and less bulky, the system of automatic promotion needs to be readjusted and the teacher-pupil ratio needs to be improved. Such suggestions are helpful but it should be realized that these are only the external constraints and may not necessarily, by themselves, produce the desirable effects.

A specific suggestion has previously been made but is worth repeating and that is to allow for possible modifications in the pattern of the curriculum to meet individual needs. The suggestion originally from Cronbach (NCTM, 1972) provides for these possible sets of modifications.

1. Adaptation within a predetermined program in which both the educational goals and instructional treatment are fixed. In order to meet individual differences the duration of schooling (the amount of time spent on teaching/learning) could be altered (lengthened or shortened) and/or to teach all pupils to mastery level.
2. Adaptation by matching goals to the individual, in which educational goals are optional implying that each pupil's prospective adult role might be determined and a curriculum provided that would prepare him for that role. With regard to early primary school years, the adaptation might take the form of providing for optional and minimal areas of study in the mathematics syllabus and to teach these pupils to mastery level.
3. Adaptation by erasing individual differences in which goals are fixed but there are alternative instructional treatments. In this case it may be necessary to provide for remedial classes and perhaps also for enrichment classes.

While such adaptations or modifications of the pattern of curriculum may be multiplied and exemplified, for the time being and the foreseeable future, the onus or responsibility still will rest with the teacher in the classroom. What practical suggestions can be made for the teachers? I shall attempt to list some of these suggestions and at the same time I would like to stress that the implementation and execution of each of the suggested approaches would take a separate workshop or seminar to discuss:—

POSSIBLE TEACHING STRATEGIES

1. Employ repetition through spiralling
2. Dramatize the material
3. Attend to reading problems
4. Variety within the class
5. Concrete approach to material
6. Provide activities, games, puzzles, recreations
7. Emhasize patterns & relationships
8. Hold frequent reviews /revision
9. Use praise, avoid risk of failure
10. Give positive, immediate feedback
11. Use diagnostic testing before & after
12. Consistent classroom management
13. Relate maths. to other subjects

Perhaps, this society might consider holding a series of workshops or seminars devoted to the practical nature of these approaches, involving the practising teachers themselves.

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MASALAH PERKEMBANGAN BAHASA DI KALANGAN KANAK-KANAK LEMBAM

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A. PENDAHULUAN

BAHASA yang dibawa oleh seorang anak itu apabila ia memasuki sekolah pada peringkat umur lebih kurang 7 tahun, dapat menggambarkan kepada gurunya berbagai-bagai aspek **latarbelakang** dirinya. Misalnya, bahasanya itu dapat menggambarkan jenis **keluarganya**, latarbelakang **sosial** dan **ekonominya**, dan **pengalaman-pengalaman** yang pernah ditempuhinya, yang di antara lain, telah membentuk **watak dan peribadinya** sekarang. **Perbendaharaan kata** yang digunakannya dapat mencerminkan **jenis pengalamannya, susuk bahasanya** dapat mencerminkan **bahasa yang digunakannya di rumah;** dan **perangai** serta **sikapnya** dapat pula menunjukkan **konsep-diri (self-concept)** yang ada padanya sekarang. Bahasa yang digunakannya tidak semestinya menggambarkan **kecerdikan/kelembaman** seorang murid itu; ia cuma menggambarkan latarbelakang penghidupannya dan pengaruh latarbelakang itu ke atas dirinya.

Di mana-mana sahaja di dunia ini, seorang anak yang **normal** mula belajar melafazkan **perkataan-perkataan** apabila ia berumur 2 — 3 tahun, membuat **ayat-ayat** apabila ia berumur 4 — 5 tahun dan mula **bertutur mengikut nahu yang betul** apabila ia berumur 6 — 7 tahun. Ia menyebut perkataan-perkataan seperti mana yang di sebut oleh **orang-orang dikelilingnya,** dan ia mencantumkan perkataan-perkataan itu menjadi ayat-ayat sepertimana juga yang dibuat oleh orang-orang itu. Jadi apabila sampai masanya ia memasuki sekolah, bahasa yang diperolehinya di rumah telah mendalam pengarauhnya ke atas diri anak itu, yang kadang-kala **bukan senang hendak di ubah, jikalau bahasa itu berlainan dengan bahasa sekolah.**

B. LATARBELAKANG POTENSI PERKEMBANGAN BAHASA YANG BERBEZA-BEZA

Di Malaysia hari ini memang terdapat latarbelakang potensi perkembangan bahasa yang **berbeza-beza bagi** kanak-kanak **mengikut** keluarga masing-masing. Seorang anak itu **bernasib baik** jikalau bahasa yang digunakan oleh ibubapanya mempunyai mutu yang baik dan anak itu mempunyai **contoh bahasa** yang baik untuk ditirunya. Dia lebih lagi bernasib baik jikalau ibubapanya mengambil **masa dan minat** di dalam perkembangan bahasanya, serta **mengasuh dah menggalakkannya** mengeluarkan idea-idea melalui interaksi yang **banyak menggunakan bahasa** melalui pertuturan di dalam keluarganya. Seorang anak itu **kurang bernasib baik** jikalau corak bahasa yang digunakannya di rumah itu **berbeza** dengan corak bahasa yang diajar di sekolah, lebih-lebih lagi jikalau bahasa yang digunakannya itu merupakan **bahasa loghat** yang tidak digunakan langsung di sekolah-sekolah.

Seorang anak yang berumur 7 tahun yang datangnya daripada keluarga yang bernasib baik, lazimnya telah mula diajar menggunakan bahasa sebagai **alat komunikasi** dengan pandainya, dan mula **berfikir dan mengeluarkan idea-ideanya melalui bahasa.** Sebaliknya, di kalangan keluarga-keluarga yang kurang bernasib baik **(culturally disadvantaged homes)** mereka **tidak banyak menggunakan bahasa dengan kanak-kanak.** Kerapkali ibubapa itu berteriak kepada anak-anak mereka, "Jangan banyak-banyak tanya!" atau "Jangan bising!", atau lebih teruk lagi, "Diam!". Tidak kurang pula didengar perintah-perintah yang semuanya membunuh keinginan dan peluang bagi anak-anak itu bercakap dengan orang dewasa, apabila perintah itu berbunyi," "Bila orang tua-tua bercakap budak-budak jangan campur!". Kerapkali juga herdek dan perin-

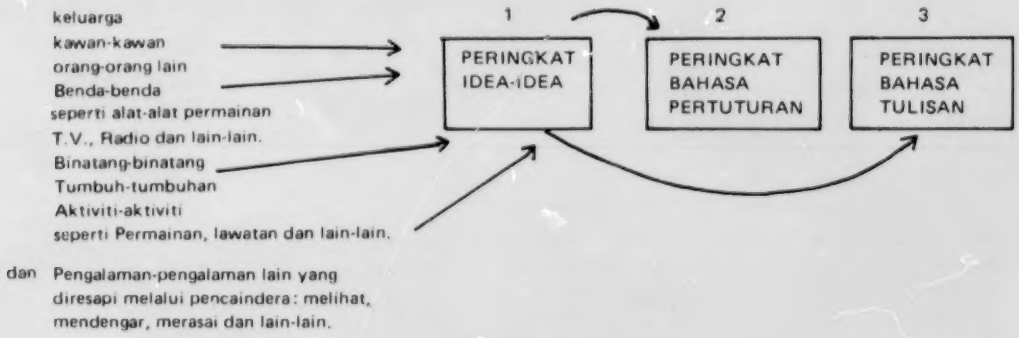
tah itu habis begitu sahaja, **tanpa** anak itu **diberi penjelasan mengapa** perintah itu dibuat, kerana sekurang-kurangnya anak itu **difahamkan mengapa** sesuatu perintah itu dibuat dan **memandu pemikiran dan kelakuannya melalui lojik dan penggunaan bahasa dari ibu dan bapanya**. Kanak-kanak yang demikian mungkin menjadi **"bingung" dan "bisu"**. Mungkinkah seorang anak itu pintar bercakap jikalau bahasa yang didengarnya dan yang boleh dituturnya sehari-hari begitu sedikit?

daripada latarbelakang **yang tersekat atau "culturally disadvantaged homes"** enggan atau takut bercakap sebab mereka itu **kekurangan (deprived)** dari segi **galakan dan pengalaman** yang sepatutnya menjadi **modal dan stimulus (pendorong)** untuk kanak-kanak itu bercerita.

Rajah yang berikutan menunjukkan 3 peringkat asas dalam pertubuhan bahasa kanak-kanak, di mana **Bahasa Pertuturan** itu muncul terlebih dahulu

TIGA PERINGKAT ASAS DALAM PERTUMBUHAN BAHASA KANAK-KANAK

Dipengaruhi oleh Persekitaran dan Pengalaman



C. PERLUNYA MENYEDIAKAN SUASANA UNTUK PERKEMBANGAN BAHASA

Boleh dikatakan sebahagian besar daripada kanak-kanak yang lembam itu datangnya daripada **"culturally disadvantaged homes"**, dan mengikut pemerhatian saya sebilangan besar daripada mereka itu **takut atau enggan bercakap**. Jelaslah maka tugas guru-guru terhadap kanak-kanak ini ialah **memberi mereka peluang dari segi masa dan pengalaman** yang boleh menggalakkan mereka bertutur. **Suasana atau persekitaran** yang boleh menggalakkan kanak-kanak itu bercakap adalah sangat penting bagi perkembangan bahasa. Misalnya kanak-kanak itu tidak mungkin boleh bercerita berkenaan "Zoo" jikalau ia tidak pernah pergi ke Zoo, dan tidak mungkin boleh bercerita berkenaan "Berkelah" jikalau ia tidak pernah pergi berkelah. Pendek kata, kanak-kanak itu tidak mungkin pandai belajar bercakap jikalau tidak ada **orang-orang, tempat ia bercakap, dan benda-benda, aktiviti-aktiviti atau pengalaman-pengalaman yang hendak dicakapkannya.** Banyak kanak-kanak lembam yang datangnya daripada **Bahasa Tulisan** (Menulis dan Membaca), dan **Bahasa Pertuturan itu besar pengaruhnya ke atas Bahasa Tulisan**. Bagi kedua-duanya (Bahasa Pertuturan/Bahasa Tulisan), **idea-idea yang datangnya daripada pengalaman dan persekitaran** adalah sangat penting sebagai bahan dan pendorong bagi kanak-kanak itu **bertutur atau menulis (mengarang)**.

D. FAKTOR-FAKTOR PENDORONG (ATAU PENGHALANG) DALAM PERKEMBANGAN BAHASA KANAK-KANAK

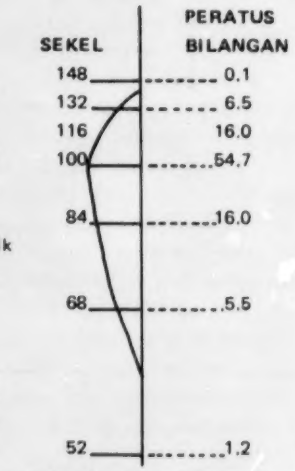
Bagi kanak-kanak yang lembam selalunya merupakan kekurangan (deprivation) dari segi faktor-faktor ini yang menyebabkan kelembaman mereka itu).

1. **Faktor Kecerdasan Otak** (General Intelligence)

Ini adalah faktor yang dipengaruhi oleh keturunan kesihatan(atau penyakit), alam persekitaran dan pengalaman. Biasanya, kanak-kanak yang lembam itu mempunyai Darjah Kecerdasan (D.K./I.Q) lebih kurang 80-90 jikalau diukur

mengikut Distribusi Darjah Kecerdasan berasaskan 'Normal Curve' dalam sekel Stanford-Bineti: sedangkan kanak-kanak yang biasa (Normal) D.K. nya ialah ± 100

Lihat Rajah:—


JENIS
SEKEL
PERATUS BILANGAN
Bergeliga (Genius) 148 0.1
S.Tinggi (V.Superior) 132 6.5
Tinggi (Superior) 116 16.0
Biasa (Normal//Average) 100 54.7
Lembam (Dull// Slow-Learner) 84 16.0
Cacat Otak Boleh Dididik (Educable Mentally Retarded) 68 5.5
Cacat Otak Tak Boleh Dididik (Uneducable Mentally Retarded). Morons/Idiots 52 1.2

Saya berpendapat bahawa ada perhubungan rapat di antara Kecerdasan Otak dengan kebolehan kanak-kanak memahami unsur-unsur pembelajaran dan pengajaran yang bercorak agak **abstrak**, seperti kebolehan anak-anak itu **memahami konsep.** Misalnya di dalam **menulis** dan **membaca** memahami konsep-konsep yang berkaitan dengan **HURUF** (yang pada asasnya adalah **abstrak** bagi kanak-kanak): **Konsep Bentuk Huruf, Konsep Nama Huruf, Konsep Bunyi Huruf, Konsep Huruf Besar, Konsep Huruf Kecil dan Konsep Sukukata, Konsep Perkataan dan Konsep Ayat.**

Bagi kanak-kanak yang lembam mungkin lambat sedikit bagi mereka untuk memahami konsep-konsep ini.

2. Faktor Emosi dan Dorongan (Motivation)

Faktor ketenteraman emosi dan dorongan adalah besar pengaruhnya ke atas keingingan kanak-kanak **bertutur, menulis** dan **membaca,** malah keinginan belajar keseluruhannya. Kanak-kanak yang **konsep-dirinya rendah** (low/negative self-concept) kurang percaya pada dirinya sendiri, dan yang demikian **takut bercakap** atau **bertanya,** mereka mungkin bersikap **"tidak apa"**, dan **bersembunyi dibelakang moto: "Berdiam diri itu adalah lebih selamat!"** Saya ingin merujjuk kepada kata-kata P.A. Witty dan D. Kopel di dalam bukunya yang berjodol 'Reading and the Educative process!. . . . "Lebih kurang 50 peratus daripada murid-murid yang tidak boleh membaca itu adalah disebabkan oleh sifat-sifat ketakutan dan kerunsingan yang begitu berpengaruh, sehinggakan apa-apa sahaja langkah-langkah pemulihan tidak akan berkesan jikalau konsep-dirinya tidak dipulihkan dan ketakutan itu tidak dikikis terlebih dahulu".

Satu perkara lagi yang perlu diingati ialah bahawa kanak-kanak yang lembam itu oleh sebab kelembamannya, kerapkali mengalami **kegagalan atau kesukaran** di dalam daerah-daerah pembelajaran yang tertentu (specific learning disabilities). Ini, jikalau tidak diatasi akan menimbulkan **frastrasi dan kebosanan** yang boleh membawa kepada **masalah kelakuan** (behaviour problems) yang akhirnya akan mempengaruhi pembelajaran seterusnya.

3. Faktor Fisiologi (Kelengkapan jasmani dan pancaindera)

Ini adalah kelengkapan-kelengkapan dari segi:—

(a) Kesempurnaan alat-alat pertuturan
(b) Penglihatan (Vision)
(c) Pendengaran (Hearing)
(d) Pengingatan (Memory), iaitu Pengingatan Penglihatan (Visual Memory), dan Pengingatan Pendengaran (Auditory Memory)
(e) Pancaindera arah-kedudukan (Kinesthetic sense).
(f) Kordinasi mata-tangan (Eye-hand coordination).

Kesemua kelengkapan jasmani dan pancaindera ini adalah faktor fisiologi yang asas dan penting yang perlu digunakan oleh kanak-kanak di dalam perkembangan dan pembelajaran bahasa — samada di dalam **pertuturan, penulisan** dan **pembacaan.** Kekurangan di dalam kelengkapan-kelengkapan tersebut akan membawa kepada **kesukaran-kesukaran tertentu di dalam pembelajaran (Specific learning difficulties)** di dalam ketiga-tiga aspek pembelajaran bahasa (pertuturan, penulisan dan pembacaan). Lazimnya bagi kanak-kanak yang lembam kekurangan dari segi fisiologi dan ini adalah salah satu daripada sebab-sebab kelembaman mereka itu.

4. Faktor Persekitaran (Environmental Factors)

Yang penting sekali bagi perkembangan bahasa kanak-kanak ialah **perhubungan pertuturan 2 hala**

yang menggalakkan dan membina di antara seorang anak dan **ibubapanya.** Ibubapanya yang dapat mengenepikan masa serta menunjukkan **minat dan sikap yang positif** di dalam hal ini akan mempercepatkan perkembangan perbendaharaan kata, ayat dan susuk bahasa yang baik sejak anak-anak itu masih kecil lagi. Selain dari itu tidak kurang juga pentingnya pengaruh-pengaruh **rakan-rakan sebaya** (Peer-group) dan **masyarakat tempatan** (local community); dan juga pengaruh-pengaruh **sebaran am** (mass-media) seperti T.V., radio, majallah, buku-buku cerita dan komik. Kanak-kanak yang datangnya daripada "culturally deprived homes" banyak yang 'miskin' dari segi kemudahan-kemudahan ini.

5. **Faktor Pengalaman** (Experiential Factors)

Persekitaran tidak semestinya menjamin **pengalaman-pengalaman yang baik dan berguna** jikalau dibandingkan dengan ukuran-ukuran pendidikan di dalam perkembangan bahasa kanak-kanak; sungguhpun sebahagian besar daripada pengalaman-pengalaman itu adalah dipengaruhi oleh persekitaran. **Dan bukan semua pengalaman-pengalaman itu berguna dan bernilai** di dalam bidang pembelajaran. Kanak-kanak memerlukan **pengalaman-pengalaman yang luas dan berguna** (rich and varied experiences) dari mana mereka boleh mendapatkan **idea-idea** untuk **bertutur dan menulis.** Seorang anak yang tinggal **di desa** itu bernasib baik jikalau ayahnya sekali sekala membawanya melawat ke kota besar melihat jejambat, lapangan terbang, stensyen keretapi, muzium negara, Stadium Merdeka, kilang-kilang dan lain-lain. Seorang anak yang tinggal di **kota besar** itu bernasib baik juga jikalau ayahnya sekali sekali membawanya melawat ke desa di mana terdapat bendang yang luas dan lumpur yang dalam, kerbau dan lintah, cengkerik dan pucuk-paku dan lain-lain.

Kanak-kanak yang **terhad pengalamanya tidak mungkin** boleh banyak bertutur (bercerita) atau menulis (mengarang).

E. MASALAH PERKEMBANGAN BAHASA DI KALANGAN KANAK-KANAK LEMBAM MASALAH DALAM PERTUTURAN:

1. **Perbendaharaan kata lisan mereka terhad**

Apabila seorang anak itu memasuki sekolah pada peringkat umur lebih kurang 7 tahun, ia sepatutnya mempunyai perbendaharaan katalisan yang cukup besarnya untuk mengikuti pembelajaran secara yang formal, **khususnya menulis dan membaca** di dalam pembelajaran bahasa dan matapelajaran-matapelajaran lain di dalam kurikulum amnya. Bagi kanak-kanak yang lembam perbendaharaan kata lisan mereka selalunya **jauh lebih kecil** jikalau dibandingkan dengan kanak-kanak yang normal. Kecil-besarnya perbendaharaan kata lisan seorang anak itu mempunyai pengarauh yang kuat bukan sahaja di dalam **Bahasa Tulisannya,** bahkan juga di dalam pembacaan secara mekanis (mechanical reading) dan kefahamannya (comprehension) tentang bahan-bahan yang dibaca. Malah, keupayaan seorang anak itu untuk mengikuti pengajaran dan pembelajaran keseluruhannya, adalah tergantung kuat pada perbendaharaan kata lisannya, terutama sekali pada peringkat awal persekolahannya. Jadi tidak hairanlah mengapa sebilangan besar daripada kanak-kanak yang lembam itu sukar membaca dan kurang faham apa yang dibacanya – sebab banyak daripada perkataan-perkataan yang ditempuhinya tidak biasa didengarnya dan terkeluar daripada pengalaman hidupnya.

2. **Bentuk bahasa mereka terhad** (Restricted language code)

Jikalau dipandang dari segi sintek, bentuk bahasa kanak-kanak yang lembam itu adalah jauh kurang sempurna atau lengkap, apabila dibandingkan dengan bahasa pertuturan kanak-kanak yang normal. Yang dituturkan oleh mereka **bukannya ayat-ayat yang penuh,** tetapi lebih merupakan **ungkapan-ungkapan** (phrases) dan **rangkaikata-rangkaikata** (clauses) yang jarang ditalikan dengan menggunakan kata-kata penyambung dan penerang, seperti: apabila, jikalau, begitu, oleh itu, sebab, sungguhpun dan lain-lain. Lojik di dalam pemikirannya sukar hendak dilihat di dalam bentuk bahasa yang demikian.

Satu lagi sifat yang jelas di dalam pertuturan mereka itu ialah menggunakan **bunyi-bunyi yang bercorak seperti 'anematopia'**, yang padanya menggambarkan makna, tetapi sebenarnya bukan perkataan di dalam perkamusan. Misalnya ia mungkin berkata, "Budak tu jatuh **tot!**" Yang sebenarnya ia bermaksud, "Budah tu jatuh tersungkur!" Bunyi-bunyi yang bercorak demikian kerapkali digunakan untuk menampung kekurangan di dalam perbendaharaan kata.

3. **Bahasa mereka itu lebih bercorak Bahasa Keluarga/Bahasa loghat daerah.**

Kanak-kanak yang normal pun menggunakan bahasa loghat daerah. Tetapi mengikut permerhatian saya, pengguna bahasa loghat ini adalah lebih tebal di kalangan kanak-kanak yang lembam yang datangnya dari "culturally deprived homes", di mana bahasa yang digunakan oleh ibu dan bapa sedemikian rupa, dan pengaruh **Bahasa Standard** dari radio dan T.V. itu sangat sedikit atau tiada langsung. Ini ialah salah satu sebab mengapa kanak-kanak dari latarbelakang keluarga dan persekitaran yang demikian agak sukar dan lambat hendak mengubahalihkan **bahasa loghatnya** dengan **bahasa sekolah.**

4. **Kurang menggunakan penambah-penambah** (Imbuhan)

Ini tidak dianggap sebagai satu masalah yang besar, kerana pada peringkat pertuturan terutama sekali di kalangan kanak-kanak darjah rendah ini lazim berlaku. Tetapi jikalau dibandingkan di antara kanak-kanak lembam dengan kanak-kanak yang tidak, penggunaannya itu lebih kurang di kalangan yang lembam.

5. **Pemilihan perkataan tidak begitu tepat kepada maksud**

Ini ialah disebabkan oleh kekurangan di dalam perbendaharaan kata lisan mereka, darimana mereka boleh memilih dan membezakan pemilihan perkataan itu dengan rapi dan tepat.

6. **Tidak aktif dan tidak kreatif di dalam pertuturan**

Dibandingkan dengan kanak-kanak yang lebih cerdik, di dalam perbualan kanak-kanak lembam nampaknya pasif dan kurang mempunyai idea-idea yang original di dalam perbualan, dan kadang-kadang mengikut dan meniru sahaja apa yang dikatakan oleh rakannya yang lebih cerdik. Ada di antara mereka yang tidak suka bertutur dengan kawan-kawan dan suka mengasingkan diri.

7. **Enggan, takut atau malu bercakap**

Banyak juga di kalangan kanak-kanak yang lembam itu enggan, takut, atau malu atau malas bercakap. Ini boleh disebabkan oleh faktor-faktor seperti konsep diri yang rendah, kekurangan idea-idea dan motivation, kekurangan perbendaharaan kata ataupun takut membuat kesalahan. Ada di antara mereka yang gagap dan pelat di dalam pertuturan.

MASALAH DALAM TULISAN DAN BACAAN:

1. **Kelemahan Penglihatan** (Kekurangan Ketajaman Penglihatan/Diskriminasi Penglihatan)

Disebabkan oleh:—

a) **Tidak nampak pandang jauh** (Myopia/short-sightedness).

Yang demikian murid-murid yang menghadapi kesukaran ini mempunyai **Pengamatan Penglihatan (Visual Perception)** yang lemah atau tidak tepat untuk **membezakan** bentuk huruf-huruf apabila ditulis oleh guru di papan hitam. Ini adalah huruf-huruf yang **hampir serupa bentuknya,** seperti:

o	dan	c
c	dan	e
n	dan	m
n	dan	h
n	dan	r
r	dan	t
l	dan	l
y	dan	g
i	dan	j, dan juga angka seperti
3	dan	8

b) **Pembalikan Huru-huruf** (Dyslexia/Reversal or Inversion of Letters)

Ini adalah disebabkan oleh sedikit kelemahan atau gangguan di dalam otak (Mild Neurological Dysfunction in the brain), yang membawa kepada **kekacauan di dalam Pengamatan Penglihatan (erratic or unstable Visual Perception)** dan **Kelemahan di dalam Ingatan Penglihatan (a weakness in Visual Memory).** Yang demikian murid-murid ini keliru di antara bentuk-bentuk huruf seperti:—

u	dan	n
m	dan	w
d	dan	p
b	dan	d
p	dan	b
p	dan	q, dan juga angka seperti
6	dan	9

Kerap kali pembalikan di peringkat huruf-huruf ini membawa kepada kekacauan di dalam pembacaan dan penulisan **di peringkat perkataan**

Misalnya:

ada meniadi apa

wayang menjadi mayang
dapat menjadi padat atau sebaliknya

Pembalikan perkataan secara sonsang (Total Reversal of Words) yang boleh membawa kepada perubahan makna sama sekali jarang-jarang berlaku di dalam Bahasa Malaysia, sungguh pun di dalam Bahasa Inggeris ini senang berlaku, seperti:

dog	menjadi	**god**
top	menjadi	**pot**
tap	menjadi	**pat**

Peringatan:–

Pembalikan Sementara huruf-huruf (Temporary Reversal of Letters) lazim berlaku di kalangan murid-murid Darjah 1, iaitu pada peringkat awal kanak-kanak baru belajar menulis dan membaca. Ini tidak perlu merungsingkan guru-guru, sebab kesukaran ini sebagaimana yang kita selalu perhatikan adalah untuk sementara waktu sahaja, tidak membawa apa-apa implikasi. Tetapi jikalau kesukaran ini berlanjutan dan berkekalan (persistent and permanent) hingga ke darjah II, III dan IV, mungkin murid itu mempunyai masalah yang serious.

2. **Kelemahan Pendengaran** (Kekurangan Ketajaman Pendengaran/Diskriminasi Pendengaran)

   a) Sukar membezakan bunyi huruf-huruf yang berdekatan bunyi foniknya (close phonic sounds). Misalnya bunyi fonik huruf-huruf seperti:

s	dan	z
s	dan	c
z	dan	c
r	dan	l
b	dan	m
d	dan	t
b	dan	p
j	dan	g
z	dan	j

   b) Sukar membezakan **bunyi-bunyi sukukata** di dalam perkataan, terutama sekali di dalam perkataan-perkataan yang agak panjang, iaitu yang lebih daripada 2 sukukata, misalnya 3, 4 atau 5 sukukata di dalam perkataan.

Kesukaran (a) dan (b), selalunya membawa kepada kesukaran di dalam pembacaan, di mana murid **tidak boleh menyebut dan mencantumkan bunyi-bunyi huruf atau sukukata (inability to vocalize and blends sounds of letters on syllables)**, terutama sekali perkataan-perkataan yang mengandungi **Gugusan Konsonan (Consonant Clusters)** seperti: **ny, ng** dan **sy** di dalamnya.

Contoh: sy	–	syabas
		masyhur
		mesyuarat
ny	–	nyiur
		menyanyi
		menyuluh
ng	–	langit
		ringan
		menganga

   c) **Lemah Ingatan Pendengaran** (Weak Auditory Memory)

   Kanak-kanak yang lemah ingatan pendengarannya tidak boleh ingat dan menyebut semula lebih daripada 5 atau 6 perkataan di dalam satu ayat.

3. **Kesukaran memahami Konsep** (Conceptual Difficulties)

   a) Ada kanak-kanak yang tidak faham konsep **'huruf besar** dan **'huruf kecil'** di dalam abjad. Kesukaran ini membawa kepada kekacauan di dalam penulisan di mana mereka itu campur-adukkan huruf besar dan huruf kecil tanpa mengikut peraturan penulisan.

   Misalnya:

   NAMA SAya ZaKARia bin AbDul KadiR.
   SAya Ada BaNyak buKU.

Kesukaran ini jelas sekali **bagi huruf-huruf di mana bentuk huruf besarnya adalah berlainan sama sekali dengan bentuk huruf kecilnya.**

Contoh abjad itu:

Bentuk Huruf Besar	**Bentuk Huruf Kecil**
A	a
B	b
C	c
D	d
E	e
G	g
H	h
I	i
J	j
L	l
N	n
Q	q

R	r
T	t
Y	y

Juga huruf besar 'I' dan huruf kecil 'l' di dalam abjad mengelirukan sebilangan kanak-kanak di peringkat awal darjah rendah.

b) Ada juga kanak-kanak yang tidak faham konsep Nama dan konsep **Bunyi** huruf-huruf, dan keliru di antara kedua-dua konsep itu. Mereka tidak sedar bahawa tiap-tiap huruf di dalam abjad dari A hingga ke Z adalah **Nama** abjad, dan tiap-tiap satu huruf itu ada pula sistem **Bunyinya, yang berlainan daripada namanya.** Misalnya nama huruf C itu ialah (Si), sedang bunyi C itu ialah (C)/(Cheh); seperti juga **nama** seekor binatang itu ialah **(kambing)**, tetapi **bunyinya** ialah (b-e-e-k) ataupun binatang yang namanya (ular), bunyinya ialah (s-s-s-s).

Sebenarnya di dalam **Pembacaan,** mengetahui huruf-huruf di dalam abjad dari segi **bunyi foniknya,** adalah lebih besar pertolongannya kepada murid-murid dari mengetahui abjad dari segi namanya.

Di bawah ialah senarai abjad dari segi **nama** dan **bunyi** foniknya di dalam Bahasa Malaysia.

HURUF		NAMA	BUNYI FONIK
a	A	e	[a]
b	B	bi	[b]
c	C	si	[c]
d	D	di	[d]
e	E	i	[e] atau [ə]
f	F	ef	[f]
g	G	ji	[g]
h	H	ec	[h]
i	I	ai	[i]
j	J	je	[j]
k	K	ke	[k]
l	L	el	[l]
m	M	em	[m]
n	N	en	[n]
o	O	o	[o]
p	P	pi	[p]
q	Q	kiu	[q]
r	R	ar	[r]
s	S	es	[s]
t	T	ti	[t]
u	U	yu	[u]
v	V	vi	[v]
w	W	dabliu	[w]
x	X	eks	[x]
y	Y	wai	[y]
z	Z	zet	[z]

Peringatan

Ini bukanlah bermakna bahawa guru-guru dikehendaki mengajar murid-murid di dalam darjah rendah lambang-lambang bunyi fonik (phonetic symbols) seperti di atas. Cuma adalah memadai bagi guru-guru mengajar kepada murid-murid bunyi fonik huruf-huruf di dalam abjad **dari segi sebutan,** sebab pengetahuan inilah yang akan menolong dan menyenangkan mereka menyebut dan membaca perkataan-perkataan.

c) **Kesukaran Memahami Konsep Perkataan (Word Concept Difficulty of Wordblindness/ Alexia)**

Ada kanak-kanak di dalam darjah rendah, terutama sekali di dalam peringkat awal darjah rendah yang tidak faham **konsep perkataan** di dalam penulisan di dalam ayat. Yang demikian apabila mereka menulis ayat, mereka tidak asingkan atau jarakkan perkataan-perkataan di dalam ayat; sebaliknya mereka cantumkan semua perkataan-perkataan di dalam sebatang ayat.

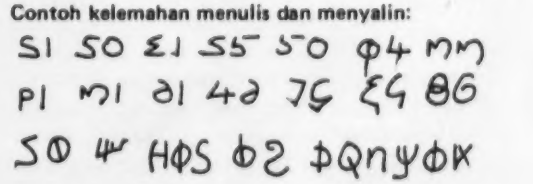
Misalnya:–

Alisukamakanbuahrambutandandurian.
dan tidak Ali suka makan buah rambutan dan durian

4. **Kesukaran Motor** (Motor difficulties)

a) Tidak boleh menulis atau menyalin huruf-huruf (termasuk juga bentuk-bentuk dan gambar) dengan betul atau tepat. Ini ialah disebabkan oleh kelemahan kemahiran di dalam kordinasi motor-halus, yang melibatkan kordinasi mata dan tangan. Selalunya murid-murid yang demikian **tidak ada** atau **tidak cukup** latihan-latihan kemahiran asas di dalam **cakaran-cakaran asas (basic Scribblings)** yang boleh menolong mereka di dalam tulisan rumi.

Contoh kelemahan menulis dan menyalin:



b) **Menulis Rumi dari Kanan Kekiri** (right to left-laterality)

Ada murid-murid, terutama sekali pada peringkat awal di dalam darjah rendah yang berbuat demikian. Contoh **'mirror-writing'** seperti di bawah ini pernah dilapurkan oleh guru-guru apabila saya melawat ke sekolah-sekolah dan juga di dalam lapuran kumpulan di dalam bengkel berkaitan dengan kesukaran kanak-kanak di dalam tulisan dan bacaan.

(Saya ada buku)

5. **Masalah Bahasa** (Language difficulties/Deficits)

a) Ada kanak-kanak yang gagap dan pelat yang mengganggu penyebutan dan pembacaan.

b) Ada kanak-kanak yang menambahkan atau meninggalkan atau mengubahgantikan bunyi atau huruf di dalam perkataan.

Contoh:–

Menambahkan: iekan, ietu, iebu, ietik, berkerja, bekerja, ikang, bulang, intang.

Meninggalkan: antar, antu, isap, bernang, tulan, misa, panta.

Mengubah-gantikan: lumah, manyak, lapat, berkerja, rori, lamai.

c) Kesukaran menggunakan **penambahan**, terutama sekali dalam mencantumkan penambah **awalan dengan katadasar**. Masalah ini timbul di dalam penyebutan dan penulisan.

Contoh:–

mentulis,
mengtulis,
mensikat,
mengsikat,
mentendang,
mentikam.

d) Oleh sebab kanak-kanak belajar dua bahasa (Bahasa Malaysia dan Bahasa Inggeris) serentak pada peringkat awal lagi, ini mungkin menimbulkan kekeliruan di dalam **sistem ejaan** dan **sistem bunyi** huruf-huruf di antara kedua-dua bahasa itu.

Sebilangan murid-murid mempunyai masalah ini.

Contoh yang menunjukkan sistem ejaan dan bunyi yang berlainan yang boleh mengelirukan kanak-kanak:

Bahasa Malaysia	Makna	Bahasa Inggeris	Makna
air	air	air	udara
gam	gam	gum	gam
cat	cat	cat	kucing
beg	beg	beg	beg
jam	jam	jam	jem
zu	zu	zoo	zu
cap	cap	cap	topi
ram	ram	ram	kambing
bas	bas	bus	bas
dam	dam	dam	empangan
polis	polis	police	polis
jem	jem	jam	jem
sen	sen	cent	sen
cili	cili	chilli	cili

e) Kekurangan **perbendaharaan kata lisan** di dalam Bahasa Malaysia pada **peringkat awal.**

Kekuatan atau kelemahan perbendaharaan kata lisan kanak-kanak pada peringkat awal mereka memasuki sekolah adalah besar pengaruhnya di dalam **pembelajaran bahasa keseluruhannya,** dan **pembacaan khususnya.** Kerap kali kanak-kanak itu tidak faham apa yang dibacanya, sebab perkataan-perkataan yang dibaca adalah terkeluar daripada **pengalaman dan perbendaharaan katanya.**

Oleh sebab beberapa faktor keluarga dan sosial, ada kanak-kanak yang tidak cukup perbendaharaan kata lisannya di dalam Bahasa Malaysia apabila mereka memasuki sekolah dan ini ialah salah satu sebab mengapa mereka ketinggalan di belakang di dalam pembelajaran Bahasa, jikalau dibandingkan dengan kanak-kanak yang cukup besar perbendaharaan katanya pada masa yang sama.

f) **Tidak faham apa yang dibaca**

Sebagaimana yang telah disebutkan di dalam bahagian (e) di atas, kekurangan perbendaharaan kata lisan di dalam Bahasa Malaysia, yang disebabkan oleh latarbelakang keluarga dan sosial boleh mempengaruhi secara negatif kefahaman kanak-kanak di dalam **pembacaan.**

Selain daripada faktor keluarga dan sosial, **buku-buku bacaan yang tidak sesuai (not well-graded)** dalam erti kata terlampau tinggi dari segi pemilihan perkataan (perbendaharaan kata) pun boleh menimbulkan masalah ini. Mereka tidak faham kerana ada penulis-penulis buku yang menggunakan perkataan-perkataan yang **terkeluar daripada perkamusan pengalaman atau pun perkembangan mental** kanak-kanak pada peringkat-peringkat pertumbuhan mereka.

g) **Bahasa di rumah/bahasa tempatan berlainan dari pada bahasa sekolah.**

Selain daripada segi masalah kefahaman bagi murid-murid untuk mengikuti pengajaran/pembelajaran di sekolah jikalau bahasa di rumah/bahasa tempatan itu berlainan dengan bahasa penghantar, masalah boleh timbul juga dari segi psikologi di mana kanak-kanak itu berasa terasing **(neglected)** sebab bahasa mereka itu berlainan dengan bahasa yang digunakan oleh guru, ataupun di dalam kata-kata yang lain, bahasa guru itu berlainan dengan bahasa mereka.

6. **Percampuran beberapa masalah yang tertentu. (Combinations of Specific Problems).**

Selain daripada menghadapi sesuatu masalah yang tertentu yang telah disebutkan di atas dari Nombor (1) hingga ke Nombor (5), ada murid-murid yang menghadapi kesukaran di dalam **beberapa kawasan-kawasan kesukaran yang tertentu.** Ini boleh jadi percampuran seperti:—

a) Kesukaran Penglihatan + Motor
b) Kesukaran Pendengaran + Motor
c) Kesukaran Penglihatan + Pendengaran
d) Mana-mana kesukaran (a), (b), (c) + Kesukaran memahami konsep.
e) Mana-mana kesukaran (a), (b), (c) atau (d) + Kesukaran Bahasa.

F. PENUTUP DAN PERINGATAN

Yang telah saya bincangkan di atas adalah masalah di dalam **bahasa pertuturan** dan beberapa **kesukaran-kesukaran** tertentu **(Specific learning difficulties)** di dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Malaysia, khususnya di dalam **Pembacaan** dan **Penulisan** di kalangan kanak-kanak lembam di Sekolah Rendah. Kesukaran-kesukaran tersebut, jikalau tidak di atasi, sudah cukup untuk menyebabkan murid-murid itu **lemah dan ketinggalan** di dalam pembelajaran Bahasa.

Selain dari ini mungkin terdapat pula beberapa **faktor-faktor 'am** (general factors), seperti masalah **emosi, kesihatan** dan **kelemahan/kecacatan** otak yang boleh memberatkan lagi masalah pembelajaran murid, dan seharusnya masalah pengajaran guru.

DEVELOPING THE READING INTEREST OF CHILDREN

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Importance of reading

The ability to read and the interest for reading are major factors which determine the level of academic performance of the child in school. The culturally disadvantaged child who lacks reading motivation and the ability to read is bound to find himself greatly handicapped. To him learning in terms of the acquisition of knowledge conveyed by the printed page is tedious and an unpleasant process. Unless his language skills improve through reading, he will remain a slow learner, and, as a result, is not likely to proceed very far in his school career.

Apart from this, there are other cogent reasons why reading is important to the child. Reading is the gateway to knowledge and information, and it forms the basis of educational and intellectual development of the individual. In the light of rapid technological development, the schooling that the child receives today is likely to be inadequate for him to meet the needs of tomorrow. Continous learning, therefore, is deemed necessary to meet the ever changing necessities of a modern, technological society. Without a mastery of the reading skills and a love for reading, this process of continuous learning or life-long self-education becomes difficult, it not impossible.

Reading was once valued merely as a means of receiving messages through the written symbols; but today it is defined as a multi-level mental process that stimulates the development of the intellect. Psychological studies have shown that the improvement in the ability to read also leads to improvement in learning ability as a whole. The reading of good books can help the child to fulfil his inner needs for ideals and models, for security and assurance, for fantasy and escape. It also widens his mental horizon and contribute to his understanding of the world around him. Above all, reading provides him with a perennial source of pleasure and enjoyment.

Reading ability and reading habit

Having the ability to read does not necessarily lead to a growth in the interest for books and reading. Instances can easily be found to show that many children and even adults in this country lack the reading habit, although they are, by no means illiterate. in view of this, it is the task of the school not only to teach children the mechanics of reading, but also to help them to acquire the reading habit. A knowledge of the important aspects connected with the reading interest of children and the ways by which their interest can be promoted is considered essential not only to teachers responsible for teaching the language, but to all those concerned with the education of children.

Factors influencing the interest for reading

Many studies have been made in the field of reading interests and motivation for reading. It is not our purpose here to discuss in detail the findings of these studies, but rather to point out briefly some of the major factors that are considered to have an influence on children's interest for reading.

1. Reading ability

The child's desire to read is naturally influenced by his level of reading ability. He cannot really enjoy reading or read independently if he has not acquired a certain degree of skill in reading. His ability to read is again dependent on a number of complex factors, such as the level of his intelligence and maturation, his abilities of visual and auditory recognition and discrimination of word

patterns, his family environment, emotional attitudes, interest, individual application and confidence.

2. Availability of books

Surveys have shown that the availability of books or the opportunity to read is a very important factor in awakening interest in reading. Children cannot be lured into reading books for enjoyment or consult reference books for information unless they are given plenty of opportunity to see books. handle books, to browse through books and to borrow books to read during their leisure hours. An adequately stocked and a well organized school library is highly essential.

3. Family background

The home environment exerts a powerful influence, on the formation of early attitudes towards leisure reading, and in feeding adroitly and effectively both transient and permanent reading interests as these emerge during childhood and adolescence. The child who comes from a family where reading is a way of life naturally has a great advantage in terms of cultivating a life-long interest for reading.

4. Suitability of books

Children's interest for reading, particularly at the early stages, depends, to a very large extent, on the kind of books provided. Unsuitable or unattractive books tend to discourage the young readers and dampen their reading interest. Careful selection of books according to level of language difficulty as well as content and theme, is, therefore, extremely important, especially when helping children with reading problems.

5. Other interests and activities

The development of an interest in reading is greatly influenced by the kind of activities and other interests which attract children at the primary school stage. In particular many boys are often so much involved in outside activities of a physical or mechanical kind that they seldom settle to reading books. Games of all kinds, minor expeditions and trips absorb so much of their energy that they seem satisfied during this stage with an intermitten diet of simple comics.

6. Motivation

Motivational factors influencing interest are of two kinds; intrinsic and extrinsic. According to Richard Bamberger, most research studies agree that there are certain general motivations for reading among children. The first motivation to read is simply the fun of practising newly-acquired reading skills, the delight in the newly-discovered intellectual activity and in mastering a mechanical skill. Motivation also comes from the desire to be acquainted with the world, to enrich ideas and to have intellectual experiences. Besides, there are also certain motivations, usually not consciously perceived by the child, that correspond to his inner needs, such as the sense of curiosity, need for entertainment, the delight in meeting familiar things and people or unfamiliar and new things, and the desire to escape reality and live in a world of fantasy.

The interest which the child displays towards a book may be influenced by external factors. These external or extrinsic factors can often be manipulated to encourage learning and persistence at a task. Initially the giving of tangible rewards and praise can maintain interest in reading. Strong motivation, especially of an intrinsic nature, is the generator of all voluntary reading activity.

The factors discussed above are interrelated, and their influence on the reading habit should not be considered in isolation. Although some of these factors are beyond the control of the school, nevertheless, the school can, through an effective programme of teaching and learning, play a very important role in stimulating in children the desire to read. The fact that to some extent the initial growth and the later stability of an interest in reading are sensitive to influences within the home, shows that the school and home should work together where reading is concerned.

Effective teaching of reading

While the methods of teaching depend mainly on the teacher and the material available, there are certain general guidelines that should be considered for effective teaching of reading.

1. Provision of reading readiness programme

Research shows that it is fatal to push young children in the early stages of learning to read, particularly if there are no previous activities to help them acquire a functional language background. As F.J. Schonell observed, "Many children fail in reading because they are plunged into formal reading with an over-analytic method employing abstract-symbols before they really understand what words and sentences mean in spoken, let alone printed, form." During the pre-school period as well as the first years of school, activities such as story telling and reading aloud from picture books are crucial

in helping children to acquire vocabularly and in motivating them to read.

2. Varied approaches to teaching

It has been pointed out that investigations into the effect of different teaching methods on reading skills have all come to the same conclusion: there is no single best method of teaching reading. Some methods are better used by some teachers, while others are better for some children. What seems to be most important is that the teacher should be prepared to vary his approach to take into account the strength and weakness of the children he teaches.

3. Emphasis on comprehension

Reading should have as its major aim, the devement of comprehension. From the very beginning, ways should be found to avoid mechanical reading of syllables and words and to improve comprehension. While reading aloud is necessary for speech and aesthetic appreciation of a literary work of art, adequate practice should be given to children in silent reading, since research has indicated that comprehension is better in silent reading.

4. Individualized teaching of reading at every level

As children vary in their reading interests and ability to read, individualized teaching should be used. This, however, is left to the discretion of the teacher who can decide when systemtic teaching of the whole class is necessary and when individualized reading should be provided so that each pupil is helped to read from the book he has personally selected.

5. Systematic training in reading skills

Skilfulness in reading is judged by considering one's ability to comprehend and to vary the speed of reading according to the difficulty of the materials read and the purpose of reading. As children advance in their reading, they should be made aware of the different purposes of reading, such as reading for information, reading for entertainment, critical or analytical reading, and reading for improving their comprehension and reading speed.

Some suggested activities for promoting interest in reading

1. Reading aloud

Reading aloud from a book can provide excitment and arouse children's anticipation so that they want to read further on their own. With younger children, picture books are best suited for this purpose. In the course of reading, questions and comments can be interpolated to maintain interest and help comprehension.

2. Story-telling

Story-telling is an art, which, skilfully rendered can arouse the children's enthusiasm and offer strong stimulus for personal reading. An interesting plot, lively presentation and use of suitable level of language – these are the prerequisites of good story-telling. The ultimate aim of story-telling should be, apart form providing enjoyment, to make children aware of the importance of books as an important source of pleasure and knowledge.

3. Book displays/exhibitions

Small displays of books or book jackets on selected themes can be arranged either in the reading corner of the classroom or in the central library. An attractive book display needs informative inviting sings and posters. The aim of such displays is not merely to bring to the children's notice books that are available, but also to stimulate their interest towards certain areas of reading. Exhibitions of books on a big scale can be arranged with book-sellers or publishers during the Book Week in conjunction with such events as reading by authors, story-telling contest, reading contest and related activities

4. Announcement of books

Apart from issuing booklists, the school can announce new titles at the weekly school assembly. This technique is useful for making children aware of the variety of books available for pleasure reading and for curricular enrichment. Selected children can be asked to take turns to make the announcement thus giving them the stimulus to read on their own and to encourage others to read.

5. Dramatization

Children like to express their imagination and experiences in many ways, such as by telling stories, drawing and playing roles of their favourite heroes. The teacher can use children's desire to dramatize to stimulate them to play the roles of certain characters in books, thereby increasing their interest in reading. When introducing a programme of dramatization, the teacher should select a story or parts of a book that contain as much action as possible. Opportunity for participation should be given to as many children as possible.

6. Drawing pictures from stories

Another way by which children can increase their interest and understanding of what they read is to draw characters and scenes from stories or or books. In this case, they should be allowed to use their own imagination and express their ideas freely. Little advice should be given about the contents of the pictures except about the selection of material and technique for drawing.

7. Library News Bulletin

This may be prepared cooperatively by the teacher librarian and his library committee with the help of other teachers and pupils. News items can include lists of new books received, book reviews, biography of well-known authors, interesting quotations and sayings, impressions or comments on books read by pupils, and announcements about any programme arranged by the library. In general, such a bulletin should be chatty, and at times humorous; it should aim at getting over to the children facts about the library which will encourage its use.

8. Quiz programme

Quizzes about books should be designed not merely to test the book knowledge of a few good readers, but to prompt as many children as possible to read and find out facts on their own. For this purpose children should be informed well in advance of the topics or books on which quizzes will be asked so that they have time to prepare and be ready with the answers. To be able to answer correctly is an encouragement that may lead children to further their reading. Some examples of the questions on books are as follows: 'Name the main characters of the book'; 'Name the book from which the extracts are taken'; 'Which character said these words?

9. Book discussions

Discussions are essential for providing children with the opportunity of relating to others their reading experiences, thereby stimulating their interest in reading. Discussions may be based either on a selected book or on different books read individually by the children. Whatever approach is adopted, children should be given guidance on what to look for in the discussion. They should be given adequate time to prepare for the discussion. They should be encouraged to say what they like or dislike about the book.

10. Record of books read

Keeping a record of books read is one way of prompting children to read regularly. The record should include information about the title author of the book, a brief summary of its contents and the main characters of the story. In addition children may be asked to record certain phrases or sentences that appeal to them. To enable children to share their reading experience with one another, time should be given for discussion in class. The use of a wall chart recording the number of books each individual has read is considered useful in arousing the competitive spirit among the children.

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STREAMING VERSUS NON-STREAMING

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Introduction

Streaming has been variously referred to as 'grading, 'grouping by ability' or 'homogeneous grouping'. Streaming and formal selection was the substance of a proposal in the Consultative Committee's Report on Primary Schools in the United Kingdom in 1931. Commenting on this proposal, the Editorial Board of 'FORUM' (UK), states that it arose from the then prevailing view among psychologists among them Cyril Burt, that intelligence was a largely innate characteristic which can be accurately measured by verbal intelligence tests. Although psychologists generally have moved away from this concept, practices initiated by this concept persist and are widely prevalent in the United Kingdom, and in those countries that have taken their educational cue from that country, among them Malaysia.

Definition

Streaming in the primary school may be defined as grouping together in one class and usually under one teacher, pupils of similar ability, which may be measured by 'intelligence tests' or determined by the pupils' performance in a given number of subjects over a fixed period of time. This in its overt form results in classes being labelled 'A', 'B', 'C' and so on. A convert form is practised when streamed classes are referred to by colours or some other indicator, instead of consecutive letters of the alphabet as is the more common practice. Both parents and pupils are often able to see through the disguise before long. Another covert form is to have groups within one class, where the seating is fixed according to general ability and tends to remain fixed throughout the year or even to continue over the years. This kind of disguise is less apparent, but pupils come to understand their relative position in the class before long. Where the group method of teaching is utilised but with grouping in a constant fluid state, the term 'streaming' cannot reasonably be applied, since no pupil can be labelled as belonging to any particular group. It will be seen, then, that the determining factor is more the permanency or otherwise of the labelling that is associated with streaming than the mere act of grouping by ability for a specific and transitory purpose such as the teaching of dancing to one group while another may well be doing singing.

Purpose of Streaming

What is the purpose of streaming? Any teacher or school administrator will easily explain that streaming facilitates teaching, and that through streaming, the gifted ones can be challenged and the weaker ones given special attention, with the emphasis placed on one end or the other depending on the attitude of the teacher.

In our country, the Standard Five Assessment Test, which has been viewed as an assessment of the school as well, is often used to justify streaming as a means to obtain the best possible results. Although the Standard Five tests do not come on till the end of the fifth year, streaming by ability is practised at least as early as the second year of the Primary Course. Where it is possible to administer special tests or obtain suitable data, pupils may even be streamed in their first year at school.

It is always a pleasure for the teacher to teach a class of bright, responsive pupils, and it should follow that the opportunities for the brighter ones would tend to expand as would the gap between them and the slower learners. However, if the claim that streaming helps to give the slower ones special attention means anything, the gap should tend to narrow, and movement from a lower stream to a higher one should be a common enough occurrence. A study made in 1972 of a large Primary School in Malaysia revealed no evidence of such a movement.

A Malaysian Study

Utilising cumulative cards, an attempt was made to trace the movement of pupils admitted in the year 1967. In Std. One, they were grouped at random, generally guided by the month in which they were born. At the end of that year they were

streamed into six classes, A – F, and the streaming exercise repeated in 1968, 1969, 1970 and 1971. In 1969, (Std. Three), the enrolment having fallen, the number of streams was reduced to five. In 1972, the majority of those who were in Std. II F in 1968, the lowest stream, retained their position and were in the lowest Std. VI, i.e. Std. VI E.

TABLE I

Distribution of Std. II F (1968) pupils in the five Std. VI's (1972). N = 43

STREAM (1972)	No. of pupils from 1968 Std. II F
VI A	0
VI B	0
VI C	2
VI D	9
VI E	19
Known transfers to other schools	2
Whereabouts unknown	11
TOTAL	43

It is significant that none of the pupils in Std. II F of 1968 (the last 16 – 17%) were in the top 40% after four years of 'special attention'. Of the 19 who remained in the lowest stream (last 20%), 11 were in the same (lowest) stream throughout the four years (Std. II – V), while 8 of them had moved to the next higher stream once during the same period. The study also revealed that 17 pupils in the higher streams had moved to Std. VI E. They came from streams as shown below.

TABLE II

Distribution of pupils in Std. VI E (1972) from higher streams in Std. II A – E (1968); N = 36

From STREAM (1968)	No. of pupils in Std. VI E (1972)
II A	0
II B	1
II C	1
II D	5
II E	10
Sub Total	17
From Std. II F	19
TOTAL	36

The significant point here is that of the 40% pupils in the top streams (A & B) only 1 pupil was found to be wrongly streamed, indicating an apparent high reliability for the streaming exercise carried out at the end of 1967. However, since the methods used were the same – totalling all the marks scored in all the subjects in the mid-year and end-of-year examinations – the 'reliability' is not surprising. It should be noted that consistency in results arising from a consistency in methods need not indicate soundness or validity from an educational point of view.

Breeding Inferiority

What is evident and relevant is that pupils who were gathered together in order that they may be given special attention (the weaker ones) did not gain at all relative to those in the higher streams. As A.B. Glegg (FORUM, 1963) points out, both children placed in low-achieving streams and teachers assigned to teach them become pessimistic over making any improvement in achievement, resulting from widespread feelings of inferiority – "the self-fulfilling prophecy" talked of in this and other contexts.

Discrimination

Research carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research in Britain found that among those who were streamed into low-achieving streams there was a high proportion of younger children and boys; older children and girls tended to do better in the first year. As is only to be expected, a large proportion of children in these low-achieving streams came from homes of semi-skilled or unskilled workers. Hence, this homogeneous ability grouping tended to penalise boys and younger children and mainly those from classes of low socio-economic status – the culturally disadvantaged.

The infant school or kindergarten would be likely to have an influence on the performance of first year pupils. If those who have the benefit of one or two years preparatory work are found to perform better than those who did not, then streaming is bound to discriminate against those who cannot afford the expense of pre-school education. Since kindergartens are found mainly in the well-developed urban centres, streaming would tend to discriminate against those in the rural areas, be they rich or poor.

Prediction of Failure

With the evidence in support of the view that those who are streamed into low-achieving groups remain where they are placed in relation to others in the same standard over the Primary School years, and with the proportion of pupils who qualify for promotion to Form IV more or less fixed between 40% and 50%, it could reasonably be predicted that almost all in the three lower streams in Std. II of a five-stream school are unlikely to go beyond Form III within the system. This prediction is possible because streaming is practised in a context of fixed syllabuses and automatic promotion, which taken together must inevitably operate to the disadvantage of the slow learner, a disadvantage that increases with time. It could be said that the system selects the 40% that would be encouraged to succeed, leaving the remaining 60% with 8 more years of 'schooling' during which time, in various subtle ways they are 'educated' to fail! In the context of a national policy that has as its aim a non-elitist system of education up to Form III, with equal opportunity for all to be selected for education beyond that level, it becomes obvious that some may well be more equal than others through the better opportunities that come with streaming.

Studies in the United Kingdom

J.C. Daniels (1959) and Brian Jackson (1961) in studies of teacher attitudes revealed that teachers generally approved of streaming on the ground that it did not hold back the bright child. While it is evident that the high-achieving streams perform better than low-achieving streams, this does not necessarily mean that the high-achievers are indeed performing better than they otherwise would. It may well be true, but evidence is lacking. Further, as Brian Jackson says in this context ". . . the evidence we have is vulnerable in many ways . . . no one has shown that it is even possible to make the strictest kind of comparison, when so much else, from teachers' techniques to parents' attitudes is involved. But we do know that **unstreamed schools are no worse** academically than their predecessors (streamed schools)". It is interesting to note that D.A. Pidgeon (1962) in a study of the performance of 13-year olds from 12 countries on 5 tests found that the highest "spread" of scores were by English pupils, followed closely by the Scots. It is significant that both the English and the Scottish Schools practised streaming whereas the other 10 countries in the study did not.

While it cannot be positively proved that streaming helps the bright child, it can be demonstrated, as Jackson and others have done, that it does have undesirable effects on the not-so-bright. The evidence of the Malaysian study quoted above also shows that the not-so-bright hardly gained by streaming.

"Cultural Discontinuities"

It would surely be recognised that, with selection (for life it would seem) taking place within the first year at school, factors other than the school itself would place some at an advantage over others. Attendance at pre-school classes has already been mentioned. In addition, the lower-income groups or the culturally disadvantaged could also suffer discrimination because of poor performance arising from what may be called 'cultural discontinuities' or differences in 'value orientations' between home and school. These discontinuities could include language where this is different from the language of the school, attitudes to gratification – preference for postponed gratification at school against present gratification at home, – parental and peer-group attitudes to learning, the impact of parental lack of academic achievement, all of which are beyond the control of the child. To suffer discrimination for factors outside one's control may well be a 'fact of life'. The gravity of this kind of 'misfortune' that comes so early in life is that the 'misfortune' may be for life, with the child ending illiterate, or semi-literate for a while only to revert to illiteracy in the course of time. Tragic as this may be, for the practising teacher or school administrator there is the cover of innocence that comes with an unawareness of the ultimate consequences of what happens in our schools; what one does is what everyone else does!!

High Cost of Streaming

What everyone does is at a price that defies calculation, a price paid by low-achievers in particular and by society in general. The low-achievers pay with their humanness, of which they have so little, and streaming becomes questionable on moral grounds. As for the price society pays, if ours was a purely competitive one, sending the weak to the

wall would be an accepted pattern of life. But in a society that aims to restructure itself so as to become a just society, one in which social and economic planning is the basis of development, the mass production of 'low-achievers' through streaming would be seen as wasteful of the greater part of the nation's human resources.

Support For Streaming

School administrators, teachers and parents tend to support streaming. One word 'bodoh' exonerates them, relieves them of their responsibilities and vindicates inaction. School administrators find in streaming an acceptable reason for not expecting much from the low-achievers and from their teachers too. On the other hand, it gives him some hope of establishing a good name for his school by using the selected achievers to build up the school's image and provide evidence of his abilities as an administrator. To the teacher of an 'A' stream, streaming helps to establish her as a good and efficient teacher, assigned to help bright children to chalk up greater achievements; to the teacher assigned to lower-achieving streams, streaming helps to 'prove' that however much she may teach, those children just cannot learn, and so saves her from any criticism of her work or the lack of it. To the interested parent, streaming serves to indicate future success or failure; a low stream would reinforce his belief that some are born to remain lowly. Most important of all, to the pupils, streaming serves to establish a hierarchy of ability, raising the self-esteem of some and lowering that of others. Streaming, to these pupils, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, with their response meeting teacher's expectations, according to the stream they are in.

Self-fulfilling Prophecy

There have been several studies of the concept of self-fulfilling prophecy in educational contexts, the most being that of Rober Rosenthal & Leonore Jacobson (1968). Rosenthal concerned himself with the positive side of the prophecy, but the negative side has received considerable attention. Here we need not decide which of the two is greater; all we need do is to recognise its very real presence, and while noting that it can do good for some, it can also do harm to a great many more. It is not the stray act of encouragement or discouragement that concerns us here; it is the institutionalising of these acts to the extent that low-achievers are reminded everyday in various ways by significant people that they have been earmarked for failure. Being selected for success and therefore succeeding hurts no one, but the opposite case is decidedly harmful; the reinforcement of the belief of lack of worth can sap the will to succeed.

True, as Merton (1949) noted, there exists the opposite phenomenon, the anti-self-fulfilling prophecy*, where the subject (the pupil) makes every effort to 'prove himself' by achieving the very thing he is prophesied not to achieve. But it would indeed be the very rare pupil who would react so boldly as to want to prove his prophets wrong! If he is culturally disadvantaged, being prophesied to fail is almost inevitable; for him to muster enough strength or determination to respond with the opposite, the antidote to the negative prophecy, would most likely be beyond his capacity, particularly when, in his view the rewards are a doubtful entity. One could go so far as to say that academic success is not his kind of success. To him academic success does not exist, and failure to achieve it is merely a normal state of affairs. With that, his motivation, among other things, dies completely.

For and Against

William Pattinson, Headmaster, Kelvin Hall, Kingston upon Hull (UK) after experimenting with a very comprehensive programme of unstreamed education, summarised the case for and the case against streaming in an extended note (Educational Research, 1963:)

The arguments in favour of streaming:

(i) It is the only arrangement which stretches the most able pupils and encourages the weakest.
(ii) 'Homogeneous' groupings are advantageous to both staff and pupils; pupils and their parents know what is expected of them.
(iii) To put poor pupils with more able ones results in the former developing feelings of inferiority.
(iv) The demands of the 11-plus examination make it necessary for the most able to be pressed (for 11-plus, in our context read Std. 5 Assessment).

*See also D.H. Hargreaves – Inter-Personal Relations and Education, London (1972), Rontledge & K. Paul pp. 56-68.

(v) Streaming arrangements follow naturally on the individual differences in levels of educability.

(vi) Results show that the practice has been successful.

(vii) Pupils are kept 'on their toes', and work hard to hold their positions or to gain promotion.

(viii) As the system of transfer is an integral part of the organisation, pupils can easily be placed in the correct group, free to move at their proper pace.

The arguments against streaming:

(i) It is used primarily as a convenience for the teaching staff.

(ii) It is unnatural and undemocratic. It deprives many less able pupils of the stimulus and leadership to be gained by learning alongside the more able.

(iii) Steaming is based on quite small and often unreliable differences in performance, which suggest there should be frequent transfers; in fact this is not so.

(iv) The changed view of psychologists: Vernon showed that pupils can be prepared for and taught to do intelligence tests; Vernon and Dempster showed that I.Q. is altered by the educational climate of the school.

(v) Given a wider spread of ability within a group, teachers are compelled to devise more effective teaching methods.

(vi) Steaming is based on false premises concerning general ability. Most pupils are a mixture of strengths and weaknesses; with good motivation of special interest, a pupil should actually be found working in a number of different groups.

(vii) Streaming based on intelligence or attainment establishes a 'class system' in the school. It thrives on competition and causes much insecurity and unhappiness.

(viii) The more individual approach and methods employed in non-streaming system are more effective for those pupils who have been absent.

(ix) Even if streaming on the basis of ability were sound, and gave homogeneous groups for learning situation, this ignores the more subtle aspects of the personality and the education of emotions.

Experiment in Destreaming

Of his experiment, Pattinson says: ". . . the absence of streaming is only one part of deliberate organisation. There are no subject or form lists, no promotion or demotion. Methods of teaching are developed to arouse and maintain interest, while formal examinations are kept to the minimum. Of even greater importance is the **approach** to tests and examinations . . . The School Report must also reflect the policy of the school. Ours has no provision for marks or positions, but gives credit for effort and highlights success . . ."

"What can the school claim to have achieved? Visiting educationists have all commented on the atmosphere and enthusiasm. We have been singularly free from behaviour problems and deliquency, and have established very fine relations with parents, and with employers in the city who speak of the social maturity and good interview presence of our boys and girls . . . We have not had an 'early leaver', and 85% of the 1957 year group gained a certificate in our first external examinations . . . In every respect of the school's work and activities, exceptional performances have been recorded by pupils at points of the original 11-plus list, and this includes promising VIth. form students."

His concluding remarks are most significant:

"I am fully convinced that streaming cannot be justified in our primary schools . . . I am equally convinced that streaming in (secondary) schools is undesirable, and should be discontinued. Motivation, which in these pupils has seldom been high in the junior school, rapidly declines further. Poor work and behaviour problems on their side are accompanied almost invariably by disillusionment and loss of interest on the part of staff.

I see streaming as only one aspect of a total philosophy of education for young people; streaming involves competition and social segregation which are indersirable, for they undermine a pupil's confidence and therefore limit the level of his performance. Conversely, non-streaming is also but one part of an organisation which places a high premium on maximum personal effort, which demands high standards of self-discipline and responsibility, and which regards work as good in its own right. This organisation, I am sure, helps pupils and staff to understand each other more fully, to work together

more fruitfully; it thrives on friendship and co-operation and secures maximum support from parents – an aspect of the total pattern too often neglected. Educationists might well consider whether many of our schools' behaviour problems, much of the increase in delinquency and our generally poor relationships at all levels of the nation's commercial and industrial life, are not the direct result of the segregation which results from streaming and the 11-plus examination, with all the competition, fears and disappointments which accompany them". In our country, we can include the dropout problem, since we have no compulsory education.

Teacher – The Vital Factor

The question that must arise from all this is: Can non-streaming guarantee that the self-image of the low-achievers or the culturally disadvantaged will be enhanced, or at least not adversely affected? There can be no such guarantee as long as the key factor in this respect is the human being – the teacher. There are innumerable ways, both conscious and unconscious, of affecting a pupil's estimate of himself. Teachers, as human beings, are in a sense, bundles of prejudices and predispositions, cultural, racial and class, and the way they react in a given situation can well be extremely destructive of the human spirit.

Jonathan Kozol (1968) has given graphic description of such situations; one example will suffice:

"If Stephen (8 years old) began to fiddle around during a lesson, the Art Teacher generally would not notice him at first. When she did, he and I and the children around him would prepare for trouble. For she would go at his desk and with something truly like a vengeance, would shriek at him in a way that carried terror. 'Give me that! Your paints are all muddy! You've made it a mess. Look at what he's done! He's mixed up the colours! I don't know why we waste good paper on this child!' Then, 'Garbage! Junk! He gives me garbage and junk! And garbage is one thing I will not have'. Now I thought that garbage and junk was very nearly the only real art work in the class. I do not know very much about painting, but I know enough to know that the Art Teacher did not know much about it either, and that, furthermore, she did not know or care anything at all about the way in which you can destroy a human being. Stephen in many ways already dying, died a second and third and fourth and final death before her anger".

Although there could not possibly be a more culturally disadvantaged child than a Negro child in a white school, the incident quoted must have a familiar ring to many in this country!

The Most Deadly Sin

A fitting conclusion to this article woule be to quote the words of Erik H. Erikson, a psychologist who has won international recognition for his works on children and childhood:

"Some day, maybe, there will exist a well-informed, well-considered, and yet fervent public conviction that the most deadly of all possible sins is the mutilation of a child's spirit; for such mutilation undercuts the life principle of trust, without which every human act, may it seem so good and seem ever so right, is prone to perversion by destructive forms of conscientiousness."

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REMEDIAL TEACHING ACTIVITIES

By
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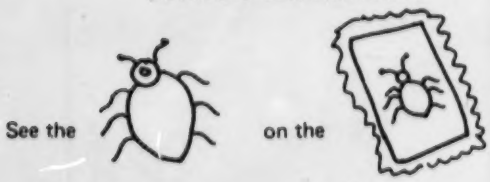
Teachers are often faced with the problem of how best to help children who are slow-learners. In our experience, these children need specially prepared graded materials that require them to use as many senses as possible. They learn best through doing. In the course of teaching such children in the lower primary classes we have found the following materials and activities to be effective in language learning/teaching.

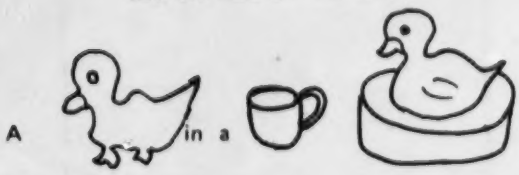
Word-picture association

Objectives: Children are able to
1. improve their spelling
2. name and identify things commonly found in the environment.

Procedure: Children are required to write the words corresponding to the given pictures as illustrated below.



See the a__ on the m__



A d___ in a c__

Word puzzle

Objectives: Children are able to
1. recognize the letters of the alphabet
2. improve their spelling
3. increase their vocabulary.

Materials required:
1. Pictures
2. Manila card
3. Glue

Procedure:
1. Select a picture and paste it on manila card.
2. Write the name of the picture on the manila card as illustrated below.
3. Cut up the picture into as many pieces as there are letters in the name.
4. The pieces are jumbled up. Pupils are required to rearrange them so as to form the name of the picture. In so doing, they learn to associate the word with the picture.
5. The pupils are then asked to draw and name the pictures.
6. They can proceed to more difficult word puzzles.

EXAMPLE:

c o c k

Jigsaw puzzle

Objectives: Children are able to consolidate grammatical structures learnt e.g. singular and plural.

Materials required:

1. A picture
2. Manila card
3. Glue

Procedure:

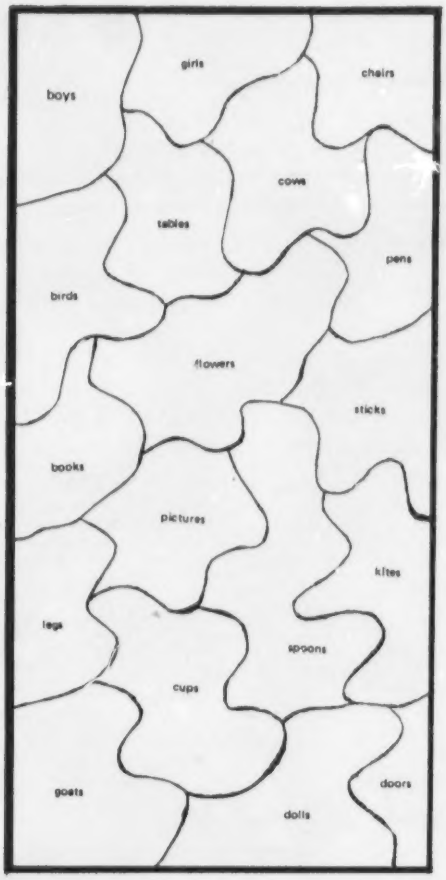
1. Paste the picture onto a piece of manila card.
2. Divide the picture into as many parts as desired.
3. Trace these parts on a piece of blank manila card of the same size. Write out the plural nouns in the spaces indicated.
4. Write out the singular form of the same nouns on the corresponding spaces on the back portion of the picture.
5. Cut out the picture according to the parts drawn.
6. The pupils are required to fit the pieces of the picture onto the blank manila card so as to form the complete picture. Whenever they are in doubt, they can refer to the words written at the back of the picture.
7. Pupils are required to write the plural noun for each singular noun indicated on the work-sheet provided.

Note:

This activity can be carried out individually or or by a group of children.

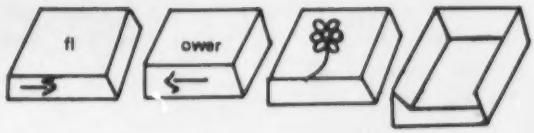
Picture

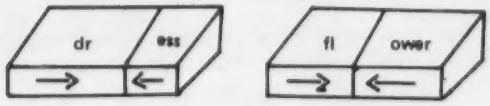
Blank manila cardboard



Worksheet

Singular	Plural
1. boy	boys
2. girl	
3. chair	
4. table	
5. cow	
6. bird	
7. pen	
8. flower	
9. stick	
10. book	
11. picture	
12. leg	
13. spoon	
14. kite	
15. goat	
16. cup	
17. doll	
18. door	





Matching initial consonant blends and word ending.

Objectives: Children are able to consolidate the usage of the initial consonant blends learnt during the speech training lesson.

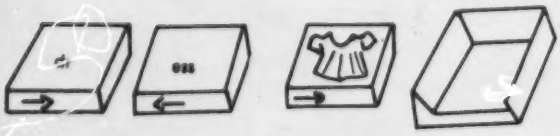
Materials required:

1. Matchboxes
2. White paper
3. Pictures
4. Glue

Procedure:

1. Cover up the match-boxes and their trays separately using white paper.
2. Write various initial consonant blends on the match-boxes and their corresponding word endings on the trays as shown below.
3. Paste pictures at the back of the match-boxes as clues to the initial consonant blends.
4. Pupils are required to match the match-boxes to their correct trays.
5. As follow-up written work, pupils can be asked to draw and name the pictures.

Front view **Back view**



INITIAL SOUNDS

By
YAP SANG
Teacher at Sekolah Kebangsaan Semenyih, Kajang

One of the basic skills necessary in reading is auditory discrimination. Here are some activities that have been found to be useful in helping children discriminate initial sounds of words.

1. Naming objects in the classroom

Teacher asks children to name objects beginning with a certain letter. The teacher pronounces only the beginning sound of the name of the object, whilst at the same time pointing to the object e.g. 'b ____ '
'r ____ '

Children answer, 'book'
'ruler'

2. Naming common animals

Teacher : I am thinking of an animal that barks and its name begins with 'd____.'

Children : 'dog'.

Teacher : I am thinking of an animal that likes to catch rats and its name begins with 'c___.'

Children : 'cat.'

3. Names of friends

Teacher asks children to say the names of their friends in the class, e.g. names that begin with 'A_ ', 'B_ ', 'C_ ', etc.

4. Feel bag

Some pictures are placed on the blackboard. Letters of the alphabet made of either plastic or hard cardboard are then put into a bag or box.

The pupil has to 'feel' for the letter that corresponds to the initial letter of the word corresponding to the given picture (e.g. 'd' for picture for dog). The pupil then makes the sound corresponding to the letter he has picked.

5. Missing words

Gum or draw a picture on a card and then write a sentence about the picture with certain letters missing. The children have to find the missing word.

E.g.

Cats like to eat f	dog frog fish

6. Anagram

Gum or draw pictures on a card. Then write down the name with the letters mixed up as illustrated below. The children have to rearrange the letters to form the correct word. Children may check the answer by looking at the back of the card,

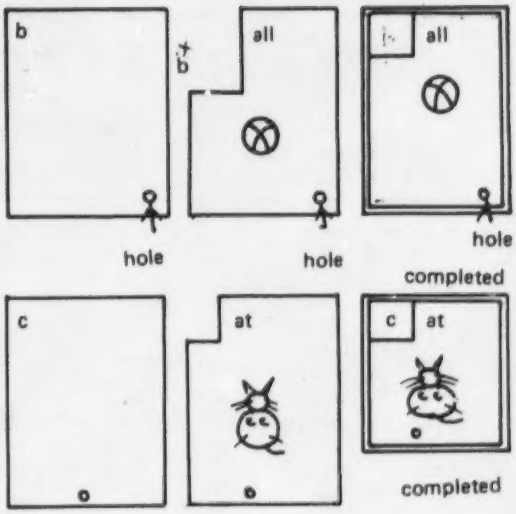
e.g.

1.	tac	cat
2.	hisf	fish

7. Games

a) Individual snap

A pack of cards, each 5 x 4 inches is made as indicated in the diagram. The children have to match the cards. The answer is correct if the holes in the cards match.



b). 'I can' game

The teacher asks a child to name an action word beginning with 'r'

Child : 'run'; 'I can run'

The teacher asks another child to name an action word beginning with 't'

Child : 'talk'; 'I can talk'

Similarly the pupils can be asked to name things they can eat/drink beginning with 'r' , 'f' , etc.

8. Riddles

Write a short riddle on the blackboard.

E.g. I am round.
I am hot.
I come out in the day.
I live high up in the sky.

Children are asked to guess the riddle and provide the answer in pictorial form. Then they write down the initial letter of the word corresponding to the picture they have drawn.

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untuk
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d/a Jemaah Nazir Sekolah, Kementerian Pelajaran,
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No. Kad Pengenalan: .....

Jenis dan Tempoh Latihan Khas: .....

.....

Tempat Latihan Khas: .....

Tarikh: ..... Tandatangan Pemohon: .....

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